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RELIGIOUS MOVEMENTS

OF

GERMANY

IN THE

NINETEENTH CENTURY.

BY

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PREFACE.

THE political and religious convulsions which have latterly agitated Germany to her very centre, and the shock of which has been unquestionably felt in other parts of Europe, will we trust be sufficient apology for an attempt, however superficial, to throw some light on the causes and effects of one of them at least. It will hardly be denied that a close connexion exists between them, but it forms no part of our purpose to enter into this question; still less do we intend to inquire from which of the two the stimulus and direction was given to the other. If the sketch we are about to offer of the latter of the two movements should not be wholly without interest, it will acquire additional value from the source from whence it is mainly derived. It may be considered as the exponent of the ideas entertained in Germany by men of liberal and enlightened minds and moderate views—as representing, more or less, the opinions of that portion of the thinking public who belong to none of the extreme religious parties, nor, indeed, professedly to any of those described in the following pages. Strict impartiality can hardly be expected in treating of religious controversies. Consciously or unconsciously, the bias of the writer's mind will occasionally betray itself—his own individuality must necessarily give to particular topics its own particular

colouring—and the views of those for whom he writes must also be taken into account. With these allowances, the following remarks may, we think, be relied upon as conveying a fair estimate of public opinion in Germany, on the different phases which religious excitement has assumed during the last thirty or forty years.

Twenty years ago, when the late Hugh James Rose closed his controversy with the German Theologians upon points of Doctrine and Biblical criticism, he concluded by expressing a hope that the tide of Scepticism was rolling back, as some of them seemed to waver, and even to exhibit a disposition to retract their obnoxious opinions. He stated at the same time his belief, that several of the German Princes were evincing a determination to stem the torrent of Rationalism, by excluding those who swelled the current from their Professorial Chairs. This was stoutly denied by Bretschneider in his reply to the *Christian Advocate*, and as strongly reiterated by him in his final onslaught on the Neologian School. The late religious movements in Germany have somewhat altered the position of the question ; but we have no intention of reviving the dispute.

It forms, indeed, no part of our present purpose to examine in detail the peculiar views entertained by German writers on the interpretation of Scripture, the applicability of particular prophecies, or the credibility of the miracles recorded in the Old and New Testament. Still less are we disposed either to buckle on the armour of their deceased opponent, or to take up the weapons thrown down by their apologist, Dr. Pusey. One remark, however, we may be permitted to make. At the present day, at least, it would be difficult to sustain the allegation of want of scholarship and sound philological knowledge on the part of those whose views he com-

bated. Very many of his contemporaries, against whom this charge was made, have, like himself, now passed away. Of many, perhaps, it may be said, that their writings have perished with them. Another generation has sprung up, who, with some identity of views and the same national idiosyncrasies, speculative and critical, occupy, however, a far higher rank, both as philosophers and scholars, and who may unhesitatingly be classed among the most profound and learned writers of any age. Upon this point, we have little doubt that those best qualified to form a judgment will side with us: it is needless, at all events, to enter into the question. As to the different shades of criticism among the expounders of Scripture in the earlier part of this century, and those of the present day, much might be said, apart from the necessarily marked individualities which must always characterize men of deep thought and laborious research, at an interval of thirty or forty years, though belonging more or less to the same school of Philosophy or Science. There is, however, this distinction, we think, to be drawn between them: if in the living writers of Germany, no less than in their predecessors, that uncompromising spirit of Free Inquiry be exhibited; and if it be no less *now* than in earlier times a remarkable feature in their Theological discussions, not to be deterred from expressing the results of their researches, however they may shock the Orthodox, and run counter to prevalent ideas—few, at least, of the scholars of Germany at the present day can justly be charged with originating an inquiry, either with a view to scoff at the opinions of others, or, like the Voltaire School, to vaunt their learning by setting at defiance common sense and common decorum. This was one of the accusations made against them by Mr. Rose—whether deservedly or not, we will not stop to

inquire. We think it could not *now* be sustained, at all events; though we have great doubts whether, if he were still alive, he would look with more complacency on the labours of this generation in the field of Theology than he did on those of their predecessors. Whether the evils he anticipated, as the legitimate consequences of unfettered criticism of points which he considered already *settled*, and of a scrutiny into Mysteries which he held too sacred to be exposed to mere philological analysis, have been realized—and, if so, whether it be owing to the boldness with which these results have been promulgated, we leave to others to decide.

Without entering, therefore, into a dogmatical analysis of individual opinions on controverted points of Doctrine and Ecclesiastical Polity, we think that it may not be unacceptable to the English public, if we endeavour to point out the general features by which the more prominent religious denominations in Germany are now distinguished. We do so, indeed, with the greater confidence, as we have not relied upon our own observations, but have availed ourselves, among other sources of information, of an article in some late numbers of the “*Staats-Lexicon*,”* written by a clergyman† with whom we are personally acquainted, and whose views, independently of our own high opinion of him, command the highest respect from being promulgated through the medium of that journal.

We would only remind our readers at the outset, that the German mind is not to be judged by a purely English standard. Germans have been long accustomed to a far greater liberty of thought on religious subjects than our-

* *Staats-Lexicon*, Nos. 53 and 54, edited by Rotteck and Welcker. Second enlarged and improved Edition. Altona, 1848.

† The Rev. C. Schmetzer, Pastor of Ziegelhausen, in the Grand Duchy of Baden.

selves—to a freedom of discussion which would shock many of us, simply because the members of the different persuasions in England subscribe much more implicitly and passively to the doctrinal watchwords of their respective leaders, than is the case with any religious party in Germany. A strict uniformity of belief, indeed, on points, at least, not held to be Fundamentals (and of these they have fewer than ourselves), would seem to be peculiarly distasteful to the genius of that nation. Hence, schisms have usually arisen whenever an attempt has been made to establish a formula of subscription to any definite creed. Very wide differences of opinion, therefore, on many points which Englishmen either take for granted, or on which they are not bold enough to express a doubt, may and do exist in the same religious communities in Germany, without laying a man open to the charge of heresy or infidelity, which would brand him in this country as a Free-Thinker, or something worse.

If, then, any expressions should occur in the following pages which may seem startling to such as are accustomed to a different current of thought and phraseology, it must be remembered that they have reference to persons whose ideas have been formed under a different system of religious training. The harshness and intolerance so frequently exhibited, especially by English Divines, towards German writers, who differ from them, perhaps, more in sound than in reality, is one of the most lamentable features of the present day. Happy would it be if these observations were applicable only to those who are not conversant with the characteristic modes of thought and language peculiar to Germany. It is, however, to be feared that, with all our professions of pure Faith and sound Doctrine, we are still very far from realizing the true Christian Rule of life—that of judging our neighbours

with a charitable judgment, and of doing unto others as we would they should do unto us. We are too apt to attach importance to mere words, without being quite sure that we understand them in the same sense in which they are used. A clear understanding of words and ideas is an essential preliminary to all discussion. Without it, it is not merely idle, but prejudicial. It is this radical defect which has been the source of so many apparent differences where none really exist, and which has created unfavourable impressions upon points, where a little explanation would have sufficed to rectify all misapprehension. We hope that the following observations may have the effect of correcting some erroneous notions as to the views of several of the different denominations of German Christians, and of removing undue prejudices against persons, whose very names have been a stumbling-block in this country.

RELIGIOUS MOVEMENTS OF GERMANY

IN THE

NINETEENTH CENTURY.

A FONDNESS for soaring into the supersensuous world, frequently, indeed, to the neglect of material interests, and with the consequent loss of material advantages, seems to be a predominant trait in the German character. Jean Paul, in the early part of this century, drew the following happy distinction between the French, English, and German mind. "The three most cultivated nations in Europe," he says, "have thus appropriated to themselves the three elements. The French took the Earth, the British the Water, the Germans the Air. This is the reason why the latter are so frequently in the clouds." This tendency to Idealism, and the generally esoteric character of the German mind, has undoubtedly been, on the one hand, the source of much that is good, much that is noble. It gave birth to those splendid discoveries in science which have rendered the German name illustrious among the most gifted and cultivated nations of the world—it lent to German poetry and philosophy, to their researches in the wide domain of nature and of history, an

impetus peculiar to themselves, and produced those masterpieces of national literature which established their title to a History at an epoch when they had no other of which they could justly boast—it was the basis of that moral and religious feeling so deeply implanted in the nation, which gave them respectability even in times of the lowest political debasement, and supplied a moral energy to their efforts after self-regeneration, which enabled them, at the critical moment, to shake off the yoke of foreign dominion. This peculiarity in their national character has been, on the other hand, the source of many evils. The innate fondness for the Ideal, to which we have before alluded, and which offered so powerful an incitement to the mind of the German to grasp at Heaven, had also the effect of making him forgetful of the Earth, and thereby of jeopardising many worldly advantages, to the early acquisition of which other nations owed their political importance. This propensity to look within himself, this religious tendency in the German mind, did not fail to attract the especial notice of the Roman hierarchy, and with great adroitness she made it subservient to her own purposes. The historian cannot but remark how, throughout the whole of the Middle Ages, and even down to modern times, she threw her giant web over Germany, and with a tenacity and perseverance for which she has ever been remarkable, drew within it and applied every element which could advance the accomplishment of her own ends. The Imperial Crown itself was not too elevated a mark for her ambition. She made the venture, succeeded, and trampled it under foot. Even the Houses of Salier and Hohenstaufen, powerful as they were, succumbed in the conflict with Rome, and too often, compatibly with the honour of Germany, allowed her at one time to dictate laws from beyond the Alps, at another, to menace with the threat of Ban and

Interdict. Germany, again, was the principal point to which the Roman Prelates despatched their dealers in Indulgences, and which they strove, by every species of ecclesiastical imposture, to lay under contribution and dependence upon her authority. At this very hour, some of the greatest German Princes maintain Concordats with Rome—it is Germany at this hour that her creatures are the most active in ensnaring, where the Jesuits are reaping their richest harvest, and where, in the south and in the north, the wind is heard which blows from the Vatican across the Alps. Such pretensions, on the part of a Foreign Power, such degradation and self-abasement on the part of a great and intelligent nation, can only be tolerated and accounted for on one ground—the peculiar bent and bias of their mind, the habitual propensity to rivet their attention on eternal interests, rather than on material and sensuous objects.

However erroneous the different systems may be considered by which this most laudable object is sought to be attained, the view here taken up is in nowise affected. Our argument has reference to the end and not the means. The eminently practical tendency of the English character has undoubtedly preserved us from a like dependency; and it is this characteristic difference between the Practical and Theoretical, the Actual and the Ideal, which constitutes the distinguishing features of the two nations. Hence it is that the German is of all men the most ready to make the greatest sacrifices for his supposed eternal interests. Their religion is to them a matter of the most serious earnest. Degrade, impoverish, oppress, ill-use them as you will, expatriate their children by thousands to the most remote regions of the earth—they may bear it with patience and resignation. Attack their religious feelings, their faith and their church, you drive the iron into their

souls ; and they are ready, in behalf of their Ideal interests, the freedom of conscience, to shed the last drop of their blood.

This was the reason why Germany was the land which first baffled the machinations of Rome—why that soil from which she had heretofore gathered her richest harvests, was turned into the theatre of her most decisive discomfiture. The nation which, like a flock of pious lambs, had submitted for centuries to the spiritual pastor in the name of Jesus Christ—had blindly suffered itself to be kept in leading-strings, subjugated and preyed upon by that enthralling power—rose up on a sudden like a mighty avenging angel with the flaming sword, and in the same sacred name drove out from her precincts the money-changers and traffickers of Rome. However powerful a reaction these struggles for reformation might call forth, though the country was desolated by a war of thirty years' duration, accompanied by unexampled atrocities, and however utterly the peace by which it was succeeded might sever the loose bands which united the imperial body-corporate, and lead to its entire disruption, Germany preferred the loss of her political unity to that of her religious liberty. The agitation created by the Reformation of the sixteenth century is in activity at this hour ; a movement is at work, and one of so important a character, as to entitle it to be regarded as a second death-blow to the Roman Hierarchy. Out of the bosom of the Catholic as well as the Protestant Church, the most antagonistic principles have sprung up, in direct coalition with the political movements of the day ; and with these a variety of startling phenomena, which seem to prepare for Germany a glorious future and general regeneration. In judging, therefore, of the political agitation now in progress, the question of religion must not be overlooked.

Each must be allowed its due weight, and the reciprocal relations and interconnexion of the two be duly estimated. Without this consideration, it will be impossible to arrive at any just conclusion as to the causes and results of the present excitement.

In giving a sketch of the state of religious parties in Germany, we propose to divide them into five heads, and to offer some remarks on each in their chronological order. They will comprise the Pietists—Friends of Light—German-catholics—the Missionary—and Gustavus-Adolphus Societies.

1. PIETISTS.—Among all the phenomena which have appeared in the Evangelical Church since the Reformation, none perhaps is more remarkable than Modern Pietism. At a time when human reason boasts of having gained the most signal victory over narrow-mindedness, prejudice, and superstition—when the boldest researches in every branch of science are advancing with giant steps the mental development of the human race, and every new idea, every new intellectual achievement, by means of progressive discoveries, is wafted with a rapidity bordering upon magic, over land and sea to the most distant zones—at a time when the cry for civil liberty is echoed throughout the length and breadth of the land, and the struggle for new political existence is raging around us—at this very time we find no inconsiderable body of men in Germany retrograding in their religious ideas and practices, hiding under a bushel the light so hardly acquired, by which a clear and rational view of God and the world has been exhibited, and again voluntarily bending their necks under the yoke of antiquated dogmas, Church articles, a blind and paralysing belief in the *letter* of Scripture. It would, indeed, be no easy task clearly to define the nature, origin, and multiplicity of form under

which these peculiar mental phenomena have sprung into existence. They amalgamate and interchange like the colours of the rainbow. The very name which has been given them, and which has notoriously a very different signification in Ecclesiastical History, shows how little the true characteristics of Modern Pietism have been appreciated. It is sometimes confounded with genuine and true Piety, sometimes with the Pietism of the latter half of the seventeenth century, sometimes with Mysticism, and sometimes with Orthodoxy; the consequence is, that public opinion is divided, one party patronizing and supporting, the other attacking and opposing it. The former regard it as one of the most healthy signs of the times, an unfailing medicine for the weak faith of the present day, a wholesome and salutary antidote to the ungodliness and self-righteousness of this worldly age—in a word, as the firmest prop of the State, the Throne, the Church, and Historic Right. The other party, again, deprecate it as the principal among the many indications of the unhealthy state of society, as the enervating, deadly plague-spot of the age, a sneaking, hypocritical sham, destructive of all morality, energy, and self-dignity—a drag upon the political regeneration of the people, endangering the peace of the Church, and offering up its victims to Jesuitry, servility, intellectual darkness, and the rankest superstition. This startling contrariety of opinions renders it necessary to institute an impartial and candid examination into the Nature, Origin, and Influence of Modern Pietism on German society.

Let us consider first, the etymology of the word, Pietism, which is not calculated, *à priori*, to produce a favourable impression of the quality implied by it. It is true that the Latin word, *Pietas*, implies the highest and noblest aim to which the human mind and heart can aspire—a

reverence and holy fear of God, and the acting up to such feelings by a faithful discharge of all the social duties, to our country, our relatives, our friends, and our neighbours. It is generally translated Piety—by which is implied the entire subjugation of the Inner Man, the Thoughts, Feelings, and Will, to the Will of God. It comprises, therefore, not merely Reverence, but all the other sentiments connected with it—Love, Confidence, Thankfulness, Resignation, Wonder, Prayer. In this sense Piety is the purest and fairest blossom of the human mind—the most elevated achievement of the soul, synonymous, in short, with moral dignity, for man has in reality no moral worth except in as far as he is imbued with these divine elements.

But it undergoes an important modification when coupled with the addition of the final *ism*. The analogy of other words of a similar termination, such as Calvinism, Platonism, Idealism, Materialism, and the like, implies some religious or philosophic tendency, a system, a theory, or some particular predominating character in the subject in question. In this sense, *Pietism* is a theory of Piety, or an intimation that it is either something to be acquired or professed. Strictly speaking, however, it is a nonentity. Piety can neither be taught nor learned. It is the most original, deeply-seated, direct emanation from the shrine of the human heart, the pure vestal fire, which can only be lighted from Heaven. To talk of teaching, learning, or producing it, is touching or profaning it with unholy hands. Thus it would become mere outward show, ostentation, semblance of sanctity, Pharisaical worship, a caricature. There are, in fact, many other words with the same termination, by which the original sense is similarly modified, implying either a diseased state of the mind or body, an affection, a failing, as Paroxysm and Fanaticism,

or a caricature of sanctity, as Mysticism, Methodism, &c. Pietism belongs to the same category. It is no longer pure Piety, but a Profession of Piety—Cant, Hypocrisy, Affectation, Downcast Looks and Demureness of Countenance, which bear the same relation to real Piety as Coquetry does to Maiden Modesty.

If we look to the historical origin of Pietism, ecclesiastical history refers us to one of the most venerable men who ever dedicated their lives to the service of God and the good of mankind—we mean Philip Jacob Spener, one of the Seniors of Frankfort-on-the-Maine. It was his lot to be born at a time when the state of the Church in Germany was neither hopeful nor encouraging. The warm, vital energies which distinguish the period of the Reformation, the heroic spirit and fervent zeal of its earliest founders, had already degenerated into dead and empty forms. The *Formula Concordiæ* of Berg, in particular, had revived that antiquated, scholastic dogmatism, which had been so successfully combated by Luther and Melancthon. The preachers, wholly forgetful of the first Christian commandment, love, had introduced anew into their pulpits dogmatical and polemical discussions, and thundered their anathemas as if they had been delivering College lectures. In spite of the earnest warnings of the great Reformer, “to drink out of the fountain itself rather than the rills which flow from it,” the people were more easily gained over to Lutheranism than Christianity; and led astray by the unrefreshing, heartless, and frivolous discourse of their pastors into an arid wilderness, where there was no living spring from which to slake their thirst after tranquillity and truth. This lifeless system found a staunch opponent in the warm-hearted Spener. As a counterpoise to the chilling Orthodoxy, and uncharitable fondness for promoting charges of heresy so prevalent

among his colleagues—and in the hope of awakening in all classes of society genial, Christian life, he taught that the true aim of the preacher should be to explain in a clear and intelligible style the principal truths of religion, and to exhort his hearers to realize them by a virtual change of heart. On the inculcation of these principles, and the moral improvement of the class of Teachers, he founded his hopes of improving the character of the times. As a first step in this direction, he established in the year 1670, at Frankfort, his *Collegia Pietatis*, private meetings for the advancement of religious instruction, and for fostering Christian dispositions and Christian practices. So successful were his teaching and exhortation in creating a healthy spirit in the unwholesome body around him, that he may with justice be called the New Reformer of the Lutheran Church.

Not a trace is to be found in the character of Spener, of what is known at the present day by the name of Pietism. On the contrary, it was the great aim of his life and preaching to combat that very tendency, that rigid adherence to the *letter*, that obligatory use of pious phraseology, that hypocrisy and intolerance which characterize modern Pietists, as containing the very essence of the reactionary principle. "His piety," as his Biographer Hossbach has expressed it, "exhibited itself under a totally different demeanour to that of the anxious, doleful sticklers for unimportant trifles—wholly unlike the convulsionary symptoms of penitence and penance—the spiritual pride clothed in the garb of outward humility—the forced, spiritless, fantastic display of studied piety, into which Pietism subsequently degenerated." The walk and conduct of his earliest friends and adherents were a faithful reflex of the admirable example set them by their master. They were kindly dispositioned, gentle,

of quiet and retiring, though very far removed from anything like misanthropic habits. Their element was love towards God and their Redeemer, their aim a life of strict moral purity in the sense of the first believers, who, according to the Apostle, were all of *one* heart and *one* soul. Some of them, it is true, thought it advisable to give a visible token of the new spirit which animated them, by their dress, language, mien, and outward deportment. They refrained perhaps with unnecessarily scrupulous exactitude from bodily and intellectual gratifications, wholly unobjectionable in themselves, such as dancing, theatres, card playing, and cheerful, social intercourse; and thereby acquired the *nickname* of Pietists, and brought down upon themselves the persecutions of the Orthodox party. It would nevertheless be doing them a gross injustice to class them on that account with modern Pietists. Their system was not one of ostentation, but of truth and inward devotion. Party-spirit, a love of persecuting and damning those who differed from them, proselytism, cabals, and intrigue, were utterly at variance with the principles on which they acted.

The school of Spener has produced three excellent men, who have been with great justice held in high estimation—Augustus Hermann Franke, the celebrated founder of the Orphan Asylum at Halle, Lavater, the upright citizen of Zurich, and Jung Stilling, whose pious dreams of the spiritual world are cast into the shade by deeds, which ennobled a life spent in full confidence on his God. There are few Pietists, in this sense of the word, in our days. If there had been, modern Pietism would never have appeared in its present rampant form. It is merely requisite to examine a little more closely into the nature of this phenomenon, in order to satisfy ourselves of the truth of this statement. Modern Pietism is very far from

being a simple, original, religious bias, which burst forth as from a single fount, upon the mind of a divinely inspired man; but rather the product of different factors, a strange, illegitimate offset of Orthodoxy, Mysticism, and the later chilling form of the Pietism of Spener.

Of the first of these, Orthodoxy, the essence consists in endeavouring to establish a fixed rule, *norma Fidei*, as to the object of belief, from which no deviation is admissible under any circumstances. The Orthodox start upon the assumption that Christianity is *a mere doctrine, not a life*, and that the single requisite for salvation is a strict adherence to this doctrine, and consequently, that it is the only lesson a Christian has to learn. It is notorious that in St. Paul's Epistles there are numerous passages in which it is asserted that a man cannot be justified or saved by the works of the law, but only by faith. By the word, faith, the Apostle here clearly means nothing more than a *tendency* to faith—a capability in the mind to subscribe a willing belief to anything which is credible on internal grounds. The Orthodox, however, understand by it the *object* of faith—the *thing believed*. Any article of faith once prescribed, he endeavours to confine it within definite formulas, and exerts all his zeal and energies to prevent the slightest infringement of it. The Orthodox clings to words, without inquiring whether they convey any clear and definite idea. He fights for words, builds whole systems upon words, and will not suffer one iota to be subtracted from these words. However fatal this may be to sense, and repugnant to the understanding—however impossible it may be to reconcile it with reason—in matters of faith these are allowed no voice. The Church with her symbols, decrees, and councils, her universal power over the conscience, and her excommunication, stands in *direct antagonism* to individuality,

and the man who will not submit a ready obedience to her, who will test, digest, and exercise his own judgment on her doctrines, is a heretic and damned. He only, on the other hand, is in the right faith, who swears to the prescribed formula, who lives and dies by it.

If we take an historical view of Orthodoxy, we meet with the first germs of it very near the apostolic times. The Apostles' and Athanasian Creed are its first products, and it has been the source of all the theological disputes which have sprung up in the bosom of the Church during so many ages. It was Orthodoxy which led to those multifarious persecutions, that fanatical cruelty at which humanity shudders. It sent Huss, Savonarola, Servetus, to the stake, and Galileo to the dungeon. Orthodoxy was the parent of the Inquisition, the Massacre of St. Bartholomew, and the Dragonades of France, and offered at the shrine of its self-created idols so many millions of human sacrifices.

It requires, indeed, no proof that Orthodoxy is a sentiment utterly repugnant to and incompatible with the spirit of Christianity. Equally so is it with freedom of conscience, and the unfettered study of Scripture, which the evangelical Church claims as her inalienable privilege. "God," says Luther, "neither can nor will suffer any man to exercise dominion over the soul," and whoever asserts that any formula of faith stereotyped in symbolic writings is binding upon the conscience, *except the Scriptures*, that man sets up a "Paper Pope," dams up the living stream of the waters of Christianity in the human breast, and offers every impediment to the development of Christian life.

To any one conversant with the phænomena and practical forms of modern Pietism, it will admit of no question that Orthodoxy is one of its principal factors. Before

entering further, however, into the examination of it, we must pass under review its second factor, Mysticism. Etymologically analysed, Mysticism is derived from the Greek word *μύω*, which signifies "to shut the mouth," and "compress the lips," and secondarily, "to shut, to droop, to wink the eyes." In all these senses it is applied to the mysterious sleep of certain flowers. Hence Mysticism is a propensity to close the mental vision against clear religious knowledge—intellectual short-sightedness and fatuity in religious matters, not merely avowed, but brought prominently forward as if it were a subject of boast and triumph. It is a tendency to exclude religious truths from the domain of reason, and on the contrary to make them subordinate and captive to the dark powers of the fancy and a bewildered sentimentality. The Mystic starts upon the premiss that he has an innate, internal capability of communicating directly with God and a higher order of spirits—nay, that he can see them with his bodily eyes, hear them with his bodily ears, and by his sensuous perceptions feel their immediate propinquity. He considers the airy phantoms and caricatures into which the unbridled enthusiasm of his fancy converts all surrounding objects, as the only real, objective aspect of things, and trusting to his own supposed higher sensibilities, makes all the precepts of reason subservient to them. There is, without doubt, from its very nature, something mysterious, and mystical in religion. It has to deal with subjects of a wholly supersensuous kind, to the comprehension of which man can only rise by his powers of thought and feeling, and that but to a limited extent. These limits, however, the Mystic oversteps; he longs to dissolve himself in the Deity, or, at least, so completely to absorb himself in it, that by the ecstatic amalgamation, God and man become One. Of all the passions, the sexual impulses have most

tionalized out of their faith, and nothing offered them *in* its stead. Then came a period of desolation and distress. The storm which burst over France swept also with irresistible fury upon Germany, dealing out death and misery to thousands. For more than twenty years, with little intermission, her fairest provinces were desolated by war—till, outraged and degraded, she sank beneath it, and her children languished under the scourge of foreign taskmasters, without consolation and without religion. “Lord, in trouble have they visited Thee,” as said the Seer of old; “they poured out a prayer when Thy chastening was upon them;” * and, in the season of tribulation, the voice of God *was* heard, in warning, visitation, and judgment, by those who seemed wholly to have forgotten Him, and they fled again to His desecrated altars for succour. As early as the year 1811, Cajetan Weiller uttered these portentous words: “The times are becoming religious”—and when the powers of the German nation were roused again to action, and every nerve was strained in one united effort for deliverance from French usurpation—efforts which were crowned with victory and freedom—then, too, the general conviction was exhibited, in the most vital and lasting manifestation, that God had helped her; and this re-awakened consciousness displayed itself by a zeal and determination to honour and obey Him. In the year 1817, the third Jubilee of the Reformation, a Church spirit had grown up in Germany, and the ideas of the Reformation itself, revived by the recollection of that great event, were realized with all the genial warmth of Christian life. On one side this vitality was developed by a natural and reasonable process, in a gratifying progression; which resulted in several States, in the union of the

* Isaiah, xxvi. 16.

two principal Protestant Confessions in one Evangelical Protestant Church. On the other side, the only panacea was to go backwards from one extreme to another. Old church forms and dogmas must be fallen back upon, and blind, unquestioning belief in the letter of the Symbolic Books unconditionally subscribed. From the Scylla of unbelief, they fell into the Charybdis of hyper-orthodoxy. The simple and sublime teaching of Jesus, as contained in the New Testament, was far too clear and spiritual for the new zealots, who demanded something positive and tangible. They yearned after the old dogmatism of the schools—theosophic mysteries and scholastic subtleties—and made a merit of a total abnegation of reason, by believing whatever was most incredible. Any doctrine for which authority could be found in the writings of an Orthodox Churchman was raked out of dusty parchments to serve their purposes. Reason was in their eyes an arrogant and dangerous upstart, the exercise of which was sinful in the highest degree—nay, the Scriptures themselves were too rational in their estimation. On this account, the creeds and subscriptions of the Old Lutheran Church were dragged out of obscurity, and paramount importance assigned them before reason and Scripture. But even this was still insufficient. St. Athanasius and Augustin, Thomas Aquinas, and Anselm of Canterbury, the most sturdy disputants of the seventeenth century, Calov, Hollaz, Hutter, and Querstädt, were disinterred, in order to remind the laggard believers of the day what was the true essence of Christian faith. The damnatory and saving words of Orthodoxy, which had long died away, were now heard again in lecture rooms and pulpits—"Original sin, the corruption of the times, vicarious satisfaction, all-efficient grace, hell and the devil." The doctrine of the reconciliation of man to God was degraded

into the ancient Jewish expiation by blood, justification converted into an *Actus Forensis*, by which God acquits and condemns, like an earthly judge, according to his pleasure ; and, for almost all the other doctrines of Christianity, some arbitrary pharisaical subtlety was re-imposed and substituted.

The consequence was, that all such as did not hold with these New Watchmen of Zion, and allowed reason a voice in matters of religion, were avoided as unbelieving and godless worldlings, decried, persecuted, and damned. The "Awakened," as they styled themselves, congregated in larger or smaller societies, formed Conventicles, little churches within the Church, and, as "the Quiet in the Land" have ever since continued the far from noiseless tenour of their way. Indeed, they soon began to exercise their power in whatever quarter seemed most likely to favour their ends. Under the name of Evangelicals *κατ' ἐξοχήν*, they established a variety of journals, formed a union with the remnant of ancient Pietists, Moravians, Methodists, and other zealous sectarians—provided in various places a common fund for the diffusion of tracts, and the maintenance of their emissaries—and by every species of artifice and cunning, insinuated themselves into the good graces of men in power, in order to obtain the best appointments in the churches, schools, universities, and training institutions. The time is come, in a word, when they arrogate to themselves exclusively not only the title, but the right, of being "Evangelicals"—persecute without mercy all those who differ from them, and have caused a schism in the Church which may perhaps endanger and disturb her peace for centuries to come.

If we examine into their doctrinal views, the first peculiarity which strikes us is, that these modern zealots are very far from contented with pure, simple Scripture

teaching. The unclouded brightness and simplicity of primitive Christianity does not square with their dogmatical ideas; so that every point must be amplified and commented on according to their own fancy, generally in utter violation of common sense and exegetical reasoning; by which process, and the paramount importance they attach to the letter, all Christian doctrine is absolutely subverted. The basis or foundation-stone of their dogmatism is the Augustinian theory of "the corruption of human nature by original sin," and that indeed in its wildest form. The very essence of their religious feelings centres in this one point—that, owing to the Fall of Adam, a vast debt was entailed upon the whole human race, collectively and individually; in consequence of which, every child of Adam from its birth, and even in the mother's womb, has incurred the penalty of temporal and eternal perdition. This curse of sin they hold not to be confined to the human race, but to be shared by all the inferior creatures, animate and inanimate, the animal and vegetable kingdom, and the very globe itself. So far the theory of the Modern Pietists is that of St. Augustin. Sweeping as this is, however, it does not go far enough for one of their leaders in the Baden States, who, under the guidance probably of his own *lumen internum*, was bold enough to specify "the Icy Sea, the Polar Regions, the Volcanoes, and the Desert of Sahara," as the particular spots more immediately obnoxious to the universal curse. This same expounder of the modern views of faith ventured to make the following announcement, in a special lecture to the pupils of the training school at Karlsruhe—persons, therefore, who are to be the future instructors of youth in Germany—as to the nature of devils and hell.

Q. "Where is the devil?"

A. "Like God, he is everywhere—for, like God, he is a spirit; he is in the air, on the earth, and under the earth, for the company of Korah was swallowed up by the earth. The interior of the globe is in all probability hollow, and *there* is the residence of the damned. To this a Rationalist might object, that the earth is only 1720 miles in diameter, and if, as Scripture teaches, few only are saved, all the damned cannot possibly find room in it. To which you may reply, the souls may possibly be forced into each other (in the same manner that a nest of boxes is enclosed one within the other), and by this means, through the wisdom of God, their well-merited sufferings may be infinitely increased."

In like manner are the other positive doctrines of Christianity, that of Justification, the Trinity, the Last Judgment, but especially the Doctrine of Grace, cut down to their own arbitrary standard. Every Modern Pietist considers himself as especially favoured by God and his Saviour, and filled with his especial grace. Works of piety are held to be wholly inoperative, indeed injurious, and the power of sanctification ascribed only to faith in the transcendent merits of Jesus Christ. Hence it is one of their fundamental principles, "that the greatest sinners are the most acceptable." These few instances may suffice to convince the reader, that the Watchmen of Zion go far beyond even the Orthodox and Theological Rabulists* of the 17th century. The latter were satisfied at least with the symbolical books, but the former refine even upon them, and consequently, in spite of their profession of Orthodoxy, exclude themselves from the Faith of the Evangelical Church.

* Pettifogging lawyers, whose skill in finding flaws made up for their ignorance of law; from the Latin word, *Rabula*.

But by side this hyper-orthodoxy we find also numerous mystic elements in modern Pietism. Its adherents are the staunchest friends of everything that is obscure, mysterious, and transcendental. Their greatest enjoyment consists in pondering and brooding over such subjects, frequently, indeed, to the neglect of the most imperious duties. They have a positive passion for hunting out of the Bible any allegorical and Oriental expressions, and very much prefer the Old to the New Testament, because it contains so many more of these passages. In defiance of grammar, exegesis, and history, they interpret in their own way the Visions of Daniel, references to the Messiah in the Prophets and Psalms, and the obscure, figurative representations in the Apocalypse, and revel with ecstatic delight in their millenarian dreams. To them the world is a mere vale of misery and tears, weighed down by the curse of sin, in which they and all creation with them wait for the "restitution of all things," a new heaven and a new earth. There is nothing of which they have such a horror as a spiritual interpretation, because their settled conclusions are disturbed by and vanish before it. The truly "enlightened" must be able to realize in his mind without hesitation and with the deepest conviction, the most sensuous expressions applied to the sufferings of Christ, the cross, the blood, and the wounds. If he cannot do this, he is not yet fully impregnated with the genuine light. With these sensuous representations they combine the strongest expressions of the deserved curse and condemnation of the human race, and whine for Divine grace in maudlin, sentimental tones. In defiance of all science and philosophy, they impress upon the memory to the very word and letter, the holy obscurities in the Oriental allegories, which, when kneaded together in their diseased brains, become a mystical leaven, fermenting everything

that comes within their reach. Those portions of Scripture, on the other hand, which contain practical truths and moral lessons, such as the Epistle of St. James, are far less to their taste. On this account, a preacher in Württemberg declared the Sermon on the Mount to be "the weakest part of the New Testament," and the above-mentioned theosophist, to whom we are indebted for the ingenious theory of the devils and hell, says, in plain terms, that "it would be better if the Apocrypha, especially Ecclesiasticus, were expunged from the Canon." Our modern Pietists, like the Mystics of earlier times, trust to an internal light, as the operation of the grace with which they are imbued. They love, accordingly, to be styled, "the awakened, enlightened, regenerate," and hold that, in a state of grace, they can sin with the body, but not with the spirit. This atrocious infatuation has betrayed many of these enthusiasts into acts of revolting licentiousness, and to the committal even of horrors at which humanity shudders. We may instance the orgies of the Muckers at Königsberg, the publication of whose scandalous mysteries was, for the honour of humanity, suppressed by the police*—the teacher at Laichingen in Württemberg, who seduced in the course of a few years more than twenty women who frequented the conventicle over which he presided—the Separatists in the neighbourhood of Pforzheim and Bretten, whose preparations for the end of the world, which they believed to be at hand, remind us of the grossest idolatries of Babylon and Syria. A closer acquaintance with the spirit which prevails in

* This sect was very widely diffused in 1836, and though great pains were taken to prevent the publication of details, as the parties were tried in a court of law, many particulars got abroad, and mention was made of them in several German journals. Laing, in his "Notes of a Traveller," enters pretty fully into the subject, p. 226.

most of the conventicles, is convincing proof that the ruling love is unfortunately anything but of a Christian character. In the village of Nonnenweier, for instance, there was an ecstatic maid, who acted for a long time the part of a somnambulist during her hours of devotion, in which many of the Pietists of the neighbourhood joined. One day being in a state of morbid ecstasy, she exclaimed to the persons present, that "the Spirit had informed her the blood of Christ is not sufficient for the remission of sins, desired them to open one of her veins, collect the blood in a basin, and wash themselves with it, in order that they might be purified from their sins." The cause of these hysterical convulsions was afterwards discovered by the fact of the minister of the parish having to baptize a child of the holy maiden. The notorious scenes of horror practised at Wildenspuch in Switzerland, where a religious enthusiast induced her relations to fasten her to a cross, on which she expired in excessive agony, was another excrescence of modern Pietism.

Let us now consider these sectarians under a moral aspect, and the influence of their views on their lives and habits. It is beyond all question, that among their adherents there are many good and excellent men, whose intentions are most upright, both as regards faith and morals. They cling to their belief, either from sheer simplicity or infatuation, in ignorance of what they are doing, or because the mystical and hyper-orthodox spirit is congenial to their own individual temperament. It may even arise from a state of morbid sensibility, the effect of repeated crosses which have rendered them reserved and timid, warped their better judgments, and destroyed the healthy equilibrium of their minds. Many, however, and the greater proportion indeed, have adopted Pietism from want of morality, selfishness, and a calcula-

tion of the political advantages to be derived from its profession. Experience teaches, that those who throw themselves into the arms of Pietism are generally persons of weak minds, limited understanding, or disordered intellect, incapable of exercising much mental activity and real energy, and who thus abandon themselves to the gloomy vertigo of their own feelings and a languid passivity. Idlers of wealth, and paupers who will not work, women of weak nerves and hysterical temperament, men of sickly and feeble constitution, and those of dissolute habits and lax morality, are the class of persons of which their ranks are principally composed. Having no sense of their own moral dignity, no self-respect, these dis-tempered spirits fly conscience-stricken to the Cross, looking to the wounds of Christ to tranquillize their anxious forebodings, and to save them from the tormenting pangs of self-reproach and self-contempt. They thus wrap themselves in a dangerous security with the oft-repeated phrases about their own nothingness and propensity to sin; and relying on justification by grace through faith, lull themselves into a sort of delicious spiritual intoxication, in which they fancy themselves assured of future salvation. In mentioning the name of the Redeemer, they employ the softest and most delicate terms. They talk of the Lamb who taketh away the Sins of the World, and consequently their own—they make of the Saviour a cushion, on which they complacently recline, and thus, under the shadow of His righteousness, doze along their way to Heaven. Jean Paul has happily said of them, "I have often compared this false exaltation of soul, which arises from actual debility, to the tails of English horses, which stand up merely because the nerves have been cut away."

Again, it is a peculiar characteristic of all Pietists to

make their previous sinful life, which they are delighted to avow, a foil to their present state of grace. As virtue has no weight in their eyes, and grace is everything, they talk with the greatest self-complacency of their former sins, in order to bring into more prominent relief their actual regenerate condition. One of their preachers gave his congregation out of the pulpit a detailed account of all the debaucheries he had been engaged in at the university with dissolute companions of both sexes, simply to make the contrast the greater between his former and present state.

It must not be supposed, however, that all this ostentatious parade of integrity and truth is genuine and real. Although they make outward profession of great devotion, and in a whining undertone call themselves poor, miserable sinners who justly deserve condemnation, their spiritual pride is intolerable, and they are of all men the most puffed up. From their vanity they imagine that God has vouchsafed them individually an especial measure of grace. The same feeling renders them impatient of contradiction, and from the vantage ground of their own enlightenment and regeneration, they look down with pity and contempt on all who differ from them, as children of the devil, still in a state of natural corruption.

We have noticed it as a striking characteristic of the followers of Spener, that they were kind-hearted, harmless, peaceable men, who never detracted from the merits of others in order to vaunt their own, never offended or persecuted any one. The essence of their religion was purely of an internal kind. The modern Pietists, on the contrary, are frequently uncharitable self-seekers, subtle, worldly-wise hypocrites, with a peculiar talent for combining worldly advantages with their souls' salvation, at the expense of their neighbours; persons whose tongue is a

two-edged sword, and their pen a poisoned arrow. If they cannot gain their ends by soaring like the eagle, they do so the more certainly by grovelling like the worm ; and by cant and flattery frequently succeed in advancing themselves from very inferior to elevated stations. No one knows better than a genuine Pietist how to trim his sails to catch the wind, none so skilful in turning whatever occurs to his own advantage. He loves to be mixed up in everything, to offer his advice and mediation to everybody, in order to extend his influence and make proselytes. Under the pretext of Christian philanthropy, he seeks out the sick, the poor, the unfortunate, and contrite sinners, in order to allure them with the bait of spiritual food. He affects the deepest zeal for missionary and Bible societies, for schools and boards of education—to catch full-grown children with the former, the younger with the latter.

Modern Pietists have not inappropriately been termed the *Jesuits of the Evangelical Church*. It is true that in conversation they appear the most determined enemies of the Papal See, and rail the loudest against Popery and the Hierarchy. At bottom, nevertheless, they play most actively into the hands of the Jesuits, with this difference only, that instead of a living Pope at Rome (or Gaëta) they would enthrone a “paper” one, viz. the Symbolical Writings. Can any one, indeed, who looks a little into what is passing in the world, fail to perceive that the clergy of this sect have the most decided leaning and tendency to favour the views of a hierarchy ? Let him read any of the writings of the Pietists, especially Dr. Hengstenberg’s “*Evangelical Church Gazette*,” the principal organ of these views, and he will find in them all a spirit of intolerance, charges of heresy, a love of persecution, and a desire to put down all those who differ from their opinions. As they style themselves “*Evangelicals*,”

par excellence, they likewise consider themselves as the only religionists recognised by the State, and exert all their efforts to make it once more subservient to their pretended orthodoxy, and by the aid of its co-operation to advance and establish their own individual views and interests. At the Conference held last year at Berlin, one of their representatives made a motion for enforcing "the existing (now long obsolete) laws, Church discipline, and State authority, in order to repress the un-Christian spirit of the times, which is constantly and alarmingly on the increase." Not long ago, Dr. Hengstenberg ventured publicly to insult one of his colleagues, the Court preacher, Fransdorf of Halberstadt, in a report of the meeting of the Protestant Clergy at Halle, for which he was sentenced by the Tribunal to fourteen days' imprisonment for defamation.

Unfortunately, these Protestant Jesuits have been but too successful in exciting mistrust and suspicion. They have created an impression in the minds of persons of influence and authority, the servile supporters of absolutism and the "status quo," that the revolutionary tendencies and dangerous movements of the day are mainly owing to the spread of rationalism, which, "under colour of free research, escapes the labour, and foregoes the advantages of a serious study of the Bible, and by a vain boast of intellectual superiority, would fain destroy positive Christianity, overthrow Religion, the Church, and the Throne, and trample everything that is sacred in the dust." The consequence was, that stringent proclamations were issued by the governments against the rationalising efforts of the clergy. The Consistories were filled with persons of real or reputed orthodoxy, and all candidates for ordination were rigorously examined as to their subscription to the letter of the Symbolical Writings, which had long fallen into disuse. By these and similar steps against freedom

of thought and teaching in the Church, the spirit of love and peace, which had been so nobly exhibited on the union of the two independent Protestant Confessions, was in an instant extinguished. Lutherans became Lutherans again; Calvinists, Calvinists; and in the bosom of the United Church the schism between the Believers in the Spirit and Believers in the Letter, Rationalists and Pietists, grew daily wider and wider. The latter, emboldened by the favour they received in high places, raised their heads higher and higher, and displayed an untiring zeal in making proselytes. Many clergy, though in their consciences very far from leaning towards Pietism, began to show outward signs of canting and hypocrisy, to hold prayer-meetings and conventicles for the "Awakened," to hang down their heads and cringe, merely to gain popularity with the consistory and government. And behold! their hypocrisy, which in the eyes of every right-thinking man made them objects of utter contempt, brought them their richest harvest. They were taken by the hand on every occasion, presented to the best and largest benefices, especially in the towns, promoted to deaneries and superintendentships, had large augmentations made to their salaries, and letters of approbation showered upon them. All those, on the other hand, who considered such hypocrisy and sectarian dealing beneath their dignity, and who, in their public reports and official ministration, insisted rather on the spirit of Christianity and Christian life, were kept in the background, degraded, oppressed, and censured, and buried in poor and obscure country-parishes, till they lost all energy and courage. The consequence was, that Pietism spread with extraordinary rapidity in the towns and villages. In many places it was a mark of fashion to frequent conventicles, to expound in societies, and to declaim against men of the world. This

modern Pharisaical spirit forced its way like a contagious pestilence into family circles—divided parents and children, brothers and sisters, husbands and wives—put an end to cheerful society, and innocent mirth; and, like a blast of unwholesome air, destroyed the peace of the household. These dangerous views operated on the larger, no less than on the smaller circles. From pulpits and lecture-rooms anathemas were launched against those of different opinions, the peace and tranquillity of whole congregations disturbed, the Evangelical Church split up into two great parties arrayed in fierce antagonism against each other, so that it is difficult to predict what mischievous consequences it may not eventually produce.

To the Pietist, piety is *everything*, instead of which *everything* ought to be piety. Not indeed that morality is matter of indifference to him, but only *as morality*. He does not value it *as such*, but only so far as it is a *religious command*, and in conformity with the *revealed will* of God. He attaches, it is true, great weight to the application of Christianity to the heart and life, not, however, from any interest in morality and the moral world itself, but merely from an interest in piety and her truth. He has consequently no clear idea of the *positive* side of the moral problem, although he has to some extent of the *negative* side. Instead of building up the moral life, in all its purity and grandeur, into a temple of piety, he would merely strip it of everything that is not piety. The perfection of humanity consists, in his eyes, in detaching itself as far as possible from all participation in the general moral life of man—in withdrawing as much as possible from its natural wants and conditions. The object of life, to him, is to deny the moral world, instead of developing and elevating it. Pietism is the puritanism of private life—the purification of it from all worldly admixture, so

that nothing but religion is left. Hence it discourages ~~all~~ exertion in the development of the moral world. It is a passive state, and, as we have remarked, the Pietists are therefore called "the Quiet in the Land." They recognise no Christian world on earth, but only in Heaven; nor can they comprehend that this Christian Heaven is, and can only be the product of the moral development of human life in the natural world. Christianity consequently to them is a thing complete from the commencement; as complete as the manifestation of the Godhead in the flesh. The Pietists' interests are individual, and not universal, and hence the desire of making individual converts, instead of the improvement of the whole, by extending throughout the world the idea of Christianity. Tradition supplies the place of history, individual caprice that of general development. This gives a direct tendency to separatism and isolation—lowers down the moral principle in mankind, and stops its growth in the world at large. The consequence is that the Pietists, as we have remarked, lay extreme stress on the natural corruption of human nature, and its kindred doctrines. This, at a period like the present, when the idea of the dignity of man is in such active operation, renders Pietism peculiarly hateful, inasmuch as it regards the view of a moral development as heathenish, as an outbirth merely of the worldly mind at enmity with God. The natural results of these views are enthusiasm, fanaticism, and all the other mischievous tendencies, which, though they form no necessary ingredient in the original form of Pietism, are found, as we have already shown, to be almost invariably its ultimate manifestation.

We cannot, therefore, possibly agree with one of its most excellent partisans, who has designated Pietism "the self-aid of a deluded people." If, indeed, there be

any delusion in the case, the people have certainly not been deluded by those who have preached to them pure, unadulterated Christianity, and in so doing have appealed to the dictates of sound reason; but by those, who, in the words of Luther, "like sneaking, hedge-row preachers," force themselves into the Church of Christ, and palm off upon their poor, blind, and infatuated followers their jesuitical quackery and counterfeit wares, raked out of the garrets of long exploded Orthodoxy as the genuine *elixir vitæ* and water of salvation. Cordially do we adopt, on the contrary, the words of a teacher of the Church, a man held in the highest respect and veneration, who many years ago expressed his opinion, "that the Evangelical Church has no worse foe than modern Pietism—and that without the knowledge and contrary to the wishes of its right-thinking supporters, it is paving the way for the destruction of liberty of conscience, and perhaps of civil liberty, and bringing us back to the deserted paths of superstition, mental darkness, and slavish thralldom."

2. THE FRIENDS OF LIGHT.—A second phase in the development of religious life is the society of the *Friends of Light*. In substance their views are not new. There have been at all periods men who have endeavoured to establish their own unshackled convictions in opposition to Church Orthodoxy, and to maintain for themselves and others the rights of reason—the life-giving spirit in opposition to the letter that killeth, or rigid Church dogmas. As a matter of course, they were persecuted by the ruling Church as heretics—i. e., as independent Free-thinkers or infidels, and ended their career in dungeons, on scaffolds, or at the stake. All so-called heretics, however, do not come within the category of *Friends of Light*. No inconsiderable section of these have merely exchanged one

error for another. Their sole aim was to impose upon the world one rigid, spirit-killing formula of belief instead of another; and, had they gained the ascendancy, they would have persecuted all who differed from them with the same relentless zeal as was exhibited by their victorious opponents. Those only are entitled to the venerable name of *Friends of Light*, who really love light rather than darkness—such, in a word, as in a spirit of earnest research, un-blinded by the love of self, have exerted themselves in the cause of truth, of justice, and liberty of thought, and whose grand aim has been to devote the results of their conscientious investigations to the benefit of mankind. In this sense the exalted founder of Christianity himself was the first *Friend of Light*. It is notorious, that among the earliest acts of his ministration which gave a new aspect to the world at large, was the establishment of a system in opposition to the religious prejudices of the time, the antiquated, spiritless, narrow-minded precepts of the Scribes and Pharisees—a Divine Rule of life and doctrine conformable to reason, and diametrically opposed to the love of darkness and tyrannical bondage exhibited by hypocritical and domineering priests. “Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free,” was one of the declarations which manifests most clearly the spirit and purpose of his life and teaching. In conformity with this spirit of truth by which He was animated, His immediate disciples and followers continued the work which He had commenced. With an ardent zeal for accomplishing their great Master’s work, they went forth into all the world, carrying with them into the most benighted regions the sparks of a new and spiritual life, which shone forth in their own acts and dispositions. Wherever they succeeded in introducing their inspiring message of love, the old

dogmas and antiquated errors which had prevailed for thousands of years disappeared before the power of their words, and mankind learned to know God "as a Spirit, and to worship Him in spirit and in truth."

Had the Religion which He taught been transmitted to us in the form of a simple Code of Doctrine, as it issued from the mouth of its Founder, theological disputes and religious schisms could never have sprung up to disturb the peace of the Church. For the teaching of Jesus, harmonizing as it does in every part with the dictates of reason and the eternal laws of thought, and adapted as it is to the test of sound human reason, requires no belief, the reception of which does violence to the understanding and the feelings. It has not, however, come down to us in this shape. In order, perhaps, not to elevate the dead letter above the living spirit, He did not see fit to leave us any *Written Record* of the new law he came into the world to promulgate. The history, therefore, of His life, His actions, and His precepts, transmitted to us by His first followers in the Gospels, naturally bears the impress of their own views, their own nation, and their own personal individuality. The style and language of their narrative, and the interspersions of preternatural occurrences, were, we cannot doubt, more especially suitable to the ideas of those for whose instruction they were *primarily* and *immediately* designed. It is to this circumstance, and the unimportant discrepancies which naturally exist in documents emanating from different hands, that the difficulty, which many have in all times experienced, of submitting to them a literal and unqualified acceptance, is mainly attributable. It is not intended by this to assert, that the authors of these records made any additions to the original Words of their Master with the consciousness of their not being genuine, but that they have trans-

mitted to us the picture of His life, death, and teaching, as *they* in their childlike views of the world, understood it, or as it was reflected in their own minds.

Had the heads of the Church regarded this collection of the earliest traditions in such a point of view—had they considered them as a book “written by man and for man,” and left the belief in its contents to be freely exercised—Christianity would have found much warmer friends and adherents, and its records more sincere supporters. Instead of this, they made of them—what their unpretending and modest authors never meditated—a binding rule, a sort of strait-waistcoat for the faith of Christendom, and an apple of discord for theologians. The dogmatic zeal of the latter seized upon them in the first centuries as a most welcome booty, which they appropriated in their own way, and not always, unfortunately, to spiritual purposes. Out of the unpretending gospels and letters of the Apostles to their newly-established congregations were made “books of Divine authority,” directly inspired by the third person of the Trinity, and specially dictated, indeed, to the pen of their authors by the Holy Spirit himself—word for word, and letter for letter. This collection of books was formed into a canon of Christian doctrine by different synods, especially that of Laodicea, in the year 364—in which exclusively is contained the whole compass of all the truths of salvation, and the standard of Christian faith, which, alone and universally, is valid for all times—from which nothing may be subtracted and to which no addition may be made without destroying the whole edifice. At the same time, not only were all the true and reasonable doctrines of the New Testament, but, as these also were based upon antiquity, all the myths and miraculous narratives out of the religious records of the Jews from the Creation and the Fall in Paradise down to the

dragon of Babylon, formally and solemnly sanctioned as universally binding and inviolable Articles of Faith for all ages, all nations and stages of moral cultivation through which mankind may pass. It was almost made an indispensable condition of salvation to subscribe unqualified acquiescence in the contents of the *whole* Bible—and human reason, conscious of its freedom, was cruelly and barbarously summoned to believe, word for word, and to the very letter, palpable impossibilities and contradictions, and to live and die by them.

It might have been supposed that the defenders of the Church and guardians of orthodoxy had thus gone to the very verge of hierarchical arrogance and domination. History, however, teaches us, that they pushed their mockery of human reason still further. Proceeding, as they did, on the principle that the people can never believe too much, and that the more incredible the thing believed, the greater the merit—not satisfied with the abundant treasure contained in the Bible itself, they subsequently made numerous additions to it adapted to their own standard, and gradually loaded Christianity, already cozened in her very palladium, with a mass of theological and sophistical subtleties, precepts, legends, histories of saints, formulas of faith, symbols and ceremonies, under the veil of which the old germ of Christianity is barely recognisable. At length they went so far as to forbid the use of the original Record of Christianity—the Bible itself—which at first had been permitted, and prohibited the reading of it as a defection from true faith, as a dangerous love of innovation. The sacerdotal masters of the Church wished to be considered the sole stewards of the mysteries of godliness—as the sole interpreters of the Word of God. The people were only allowed to see the Deity through their dark-coloured spectacles. Every ray of higher know-

ledge which glimmered through the night of ages—the most cautious allusion to the eternal truths and laws which nature and our own hearts proclaim, was reprobated, and repressed with execration and horror. Thus, in the course of fifteen centuries, mankind became utterly excluded from the shrine of religious truth, and deprived of their inalienable rights—the use of reason and liberty of conscience.

The uninterrupted working, however, of the Spirit of God, whose superintending providence is manifested in the whole history of man—when the measure of those false coiners of truth, those usurpers in the kingdom of God, was complete—revealed its world-enlightening and world-shaking power by a movement in the human mind, the vibrations of which have been felt for three hundred years, and are still felt at this hour. A man deeply imbued with Divine faith and power sprang up as the champion of his age, shattered with his iron grasp the ignominious fetters of mental slavery, and restored to Christendom the palladium that had been torn from her, the *written* Word of God and its *free study*. If, in the meantime, this was the only positive gain—if nothing more was effected than the removal of the yoke of pharisaical dogmas, and the restitution of the higher authority of Holy Scripture—preparation was likewise made for further advance, and the door of the sanctuary of higher knowledge opened to the efforts of reason: for these venerable Records call upon every individual to search them for himself, elevate the life-giving spirit far above the dead letter, and secure to Reason her inalienable rights.

These results, however, were very far from being recognised to their fullest extent at the period of the Reformation. As the slave, whose fetters have clung to him for years, at the moment they are removed is incapable of

appreciating his new state, and comprehending the idea of liberty—in like manner, at the instant when a purer faith broke upon mankind, they started at the spirit they had evoked, and the champions of those mighty movements saw no other remedy but “to hold the reason in captivity to Church faith, and to make the spirit subordinate to the letter of Scripture.” Even then, within the pale of the Protestant Church, the refreshing, soul-inspiring contents of the Records of our religion were sublimated down into formulas of faith, narrowed into symbols, and rational and vital Christianity degraded into deadening systems of theological subtlety and doctrinal theses. None was considered to be in the right faith who did not adhere to the letter of this theological patchwork—who did not swear to words and fight with words. All mention, however, of the religion which is born with us, which nature and our conscience proclaim, and which Jesus announced to mankind, was studiously avoided. Barely emancipated from the yoke of tradition and sacerdotal dogmas, the Evangelical Church had a new one imposed upon her—the *yoke of the Symbolical Books*. Instead of a Roman high priest, she had a *paper Pope*, who was worse, if possible, than the other. Schwenkfield has happily remarked upon this subject—“Luther brought us out of Egypt through the Red Sea, but his followers have left us in the Wilderness.”

In our account of the origin of the Pietists of the Spener School, we have already depicted these melancholy times of crystalized, gloomy Orthodoxy, which so frequently assumed the form of religious fanaticism and cruel persecution. We have noticed how the views of Spener and his followers grew up as a counterpoise to the prevalent theological and ecclesiastical dogmatism of the day. These were, however, not the only antagonistic principles to that system. There was another spirit which

started contemporaneously into existence, and penetrated as deep, and even deeper, into the intellectual life of the people, and gave a still more powerful shock to the stronghold of ecclesiastical and theological scholasticism. It was *philosophy*, and a *thirst for scientific research*, which re-awakened in a few master minds. Copernicus, Kepler, and Newton, led the van, by opening up a deeper insight into the Kosmos, and the laws which govern it. They were succeeded by Des Cartes, Leibnitz, and Spinoza in the province of speculative philosophy—then by Italians, French, and English, men of inquiring minds and free aspirations, such as Savonarola, Jordano Bruno, Cæsare Vanini (all of whom were burned at the stake); Tindal, Payne, Shaftesbury; the encyclopædists, Diderot, D'Alembert, Boyle, De la Mettrie, the genial Rousseau, and the talented scoffer, Voltaire—and later still by the shining lights of German literature, Lessing, Kant, Fichte, Herder, Wieland, Schiller, and Goëthe. These were the master-spirits, who shed a new lustre over all the sciences, poetry, and art, and with giant steps advanced the intellectual life of their age. Theology itself did not lag behind. Historical criticism awakened in its bosom, and shook with its powerful arm, the old, friable edifice of Church Orthodoxy—till, like the hanging tower at Pisa, it leaned, and adhered only at the points of suspension. One step farther, and the whole fabric fell to the ground.

At this critical moment, the alarm of war was rung throughout all Europe. The French revolutionists, with their projects of universal dominion, affrighted all the nations of this hemisphere, and broke in upon the quiet life of science, and the dreamy disposition of the German people. A greater cause was now at issue than a contest for doctrinal opinions and church ceremonies. Country and freedom—the highest palladium of science and religion—were at stake. On this account it was that, during

the protracted contest waged against French usurpation, and after long years of degradation and shame, brought finally to a glorious termination, all theological and ecclesiastical questions were thrown into the background. Scarcely, however, had Germany thrown off the foreign yoke, and peace was restored, when the Friends of Darkness, who had shrunk into obscurity during the great national struggle, propounded the reactionary principles in religion and church polity which we have already described. This rendered it imperative upon the *Friends of Light* to renew the contest for the emancipation of pure Christianity from the power of the dead letter and the thralldom of symbolism and forms. This struggle, which marks an epoch in the history of the Evangelical Church of Germany, is known under the name of the *Quarrel of the Supernaturalists and Rationalists*. It was brought to issue by a passage in the ninth letter of the "Confessions" of the celebrated Court preacher Reinhard at Dresden, in 1811, in which he maintained the following propositions:— "That strict and systematic connexion, unity of principles, and consistent views on religion, can only be kept up by adhering entirely either to reason or to Scripture. The Rationalist and Supernaturalist are the only really consistent persons. In matters of faith, the former is guided *exclusively* by reason. Whatever it cannot comprehend and reconcile can form no part of his conviction. Scripture, to him, is no more than any other human book. He allows it weight only when it squares with his own opinions—not, indeed, as authority for settling those opinions, but simply in attestation that others have thought and believed as he does. The Supernaturalist is equally consistent with himself, and strictly true to his own principles. Scripture, in matters of religious faith, is to him what reason is to the Rationalist. He makes use of the latter, indeed, in order to test contradictions in

Scripture, and to judge of its claims to a divine origin. As soon as he is convinced that it contains a communication emanating directly from God, it becomes his sole arbiter in religious matters. The province of reason is simply to *explain* Scripture, and to ascertain its sense. If it seem to contain doctrines irreconcilable with reason, this is no justification for rejecting them. They must be accepted as a *communication from God*—must be submitted to on God's authority."

This declaration may be considered as having given birth to the new *Friends of Light* in Germany. Its effects spread like wildfire through the whole theological world. It was felt and admitted that the vital question affecting the existence of the Evangelical Church was at issue—the question, whether the letter or the spirit—whether faith in authority or in reason—was to have the supremacy. All the theologians in the different lecture-rooms and pulpits of Germany took part *for* or *against* reason. The merits of the respective systems were fiercely debated, in reviews and text-books, by professors, students, and clergy. While the Supernaturalists stoutly defended the ancient bulwark of Church Orthodoxy, the Rationalists attacked it with increasing success by the weapons of reason and science. The belief in miracles was no longer considered as a part of the essence of Christianity. The Church Doctrine of the Trinity—for denying which Servetus was burned—of the two natures of Christ, the descent into hell, his vicarious suffering, the real presence of the body and blood in the sacramental bread and wine, and many other props of the old Lutheran system, were obliged to bend before the progress of Ideas. The main pillar, on which the whole structure seemed to rest so firmly and securely—the *Inspiration of Scripture*—tottered and fell. Thought, once awakened and aroused to a consciousness

of its own rights, takes everywhere the same direction. As soon as light breaks upon one place, darkness will not long be tolerated anywhere. No one point of dogmatism accordingly was left undisturbed. It became gradually more and more a relic of the past, and dogmas were more and more depreciated in value. On the other hand, the new rationalistic spirit of the times was actively at work in promoting the exercise of Christian duties in practical life. In proportion as it laid little stress on professions of faith, with the more seriousness and energy it brought prominently forward the moral view of Christianity—insisted the more strongly on the conscientious fulfilment of moral duties, and on active, living love. The highest love was regarded as the highest religion. Had Rationalism, on whose side the sympathies of the most educated and enlightened portion of our contemporaries was enlisted, met with no obstruction from external force, it would long since have worked its way into general popularity, and have produced among the people at large the happiest religious and moral results. Men in authority, however, in Germany, strangely enough, looked upon it with unfavourable eyes. The spirit of free inquiry which animated its adherents was identified with revolutionary principles, and resistance to all divine and human authority. The consequence was, that all the means at the disposal of the civil power were unsparingly exerted to discourage and keep it down. The opposite extremes of religious opinions, Orthodoxy and Pietism, were favoured and supported; and Protestant priestcraft, which was wellnigh entombed, was resuscitated and reinstated. The Prussian government showed marked activity in these reactionary efforts. Prussia, who, as the first Protestant power in Germany, gave the tone to the Evangelical Church, and in some respects was the leader of

the Hegemony, took under her protection the *Friends of Darkness*, revived the old Lutheran forms of prayer in her new Agenda, introduced antiquated Church doctrines into her new catechisms, made her preachers subscribe to the Symbolic Books, promoted the modern Scribes and Pharisees to the highest and most influential posts in the Church, and disavowed, in the most odious manner, the *Friends of Light*, who were too honourable to sign a hypocritical assent to the belief in creeds and symbols, in order to curry favour with the Consistorial Church. Yet did this very government, by the appointment of Wegscheider, Gesenius, and others of a Rationalistic tendency, give great encouragement to that ill-favoured party.

The reactionary measures, however, still continued in active operation. Rationalism had hitherto been at work noiselessly and unobtrudingly. It did not accord with its principles to promote schism and disturbance. But when the anti-Protestant tendencies of the Prussian government were more publicly avowed—when the Pietism of a Hengstenberg raised its standard at the very foot of the throne, in Berlin itself, and sought to enlist under its banners the whole Prussian monarchy—when the Evangelical Church Journal thundered forth with increasing virulence its ban against all those who maintained contrary opinions—when denunciations against professors of liberal opinions, anathemas, nay prayers for the unbelievers, and machinations of all kinds, too loudly proclaimed the jesuitical opinions predominant in those corporations—a struggle ensued to give vent to conscientious convictions and free scope to the liberty of thought. Whole districts in Prussia, headed by the most enlightened and right-thinking men of the learned

professions, entered written protests against the system, and one town after another joined in the crusade against Pietism. In this respect the meetings of the *Friends of Light* were the most important. In the year 1840, a large concourse of preachers, teachers, officials, and educated men of the middle class, assembled in Prussian Saxony, to report and deliberate upon religious and church matters. At first these meetings were held at Whitsuntide and in autumn at Köthen, but subsequently, when the numbers increased considerably, separately in the different Circles. The preacher Uhlich, a man of extraordinary eloquence, and distinguished parliamentary talents, presided. Their main object was to effect, by the agency of moral example and active religion, by speaking and by writing, the end to which Rationalism tended, and in which, by carrying out its principles consistently, it must ultimately succeed. What was originally confined to timid scholars and obscure bookworms, now became an affair of universal interest and popular excitement. That Object was the restoration of Christianity to its original Form—spiritual religion, unclogged with human additions—ancient, yet ever new, in the sense in which it was delivered by its earliest propagators to their contemporaries. At first the Prussian government threw no impediments in the way of these assemblies. But in 1844, when the preacher Wislicenus, in a speech which gained great notoriety afterwards under the title of “Letter or Spirit,” candidly detailed the object of the meetings—namely, to raise the Spirit above the Letter of the Bible; and his colleague, Professor Guerike of Halle, impeached him in the Evangelical Church Journal on a charge of subverting the principles of Protestantism—the Synod interfered. By a cabinet ordinance of August, 1845, the meetings of the *Protestant Friends* were strictly forbidden, and

the clergy prohibited from absenting themselves from their cures. Wislicenus, who had gone over from Rational Christianity to the School of Hegel, was first suspended, and then removed altogether, "because," as his sentence declared, "Rationalism in him had assumed a palpable form, and he had the honesty to avow its consequences, and show how it could be practically carried out." The clergy and teachers who had taken part in the proceedings were at the same time strictly enjoined by an order of the minister, Eichhorn, under the threat of a rigid inquiry being instituted, to show no sympathy with the meeting. The conferences were accordingly discontinued; but the acrimony of the contest only increased in consequence through the press. From all parts of the Prussian monarchy, protests were delivered in on behalf of the Pietist party against Wislicenus, Uhlich, and their friends, in which they were formally declared to be unworthy of being considered Christians and Evangelical preachers. A still greater number of counter-protests were got up by the *Friends of Light* in answer to these denunciations, many of them very numerous and respectably signed. Other preachers out of Prussia, in the south of Germany even, were infected with this zeal for protesting; and in whatever corner of the land a Pietist curate was to be found, he thought it his duty to join in the crusade against reason by attaching his signature. A series of petitions was, on the other hand, presented to the government by the *Protestant Friends*, in favour of protection to Protestant freedom against the attacks of the Pietist party. These petitions, however, were peremptorily rejected by the King, and the *Friends of Light* accordingly driven to their last resource, that of forming themselves into a sect.

The first who adopted this last unfortunate alternative

was a Prussian preacher, Dr. Rupp of Königsberg, who took an early opportunity one Sunday morning of attacking from his pulpit the Athanasian Creed, and abjuring its validity. It was, undoubtedly, an ill-advised step to draw the attention of his congregation to an antiquated formulary, which very few of them probably knew even by name. It was still more unadvised on the part of the Consistory to attach such importance to it, and to remove him. The flame now burst furiously out, and Rupp,* more determined than Uhlich, seceded from the Prussian Consistorial Church, and established a "Free Congregation." He and his co-remonstrants, however, made an express declaration, that by the step they had taken they did not leave the Evangelical Church altogether. Wislicenus followed Rupp's example, by establishing a free congregation at Halle. The magistrates and clergy at Breslau remonstrated against the proceedings of Superintendent Hahn, for requiring from candidates for ordination adherence to the symbols; and against the favour shown to the orthodox, by placing them in prominent positions in the schools and churches. In a vast number of other cities and villages, especially the important city of Magdeburg, secession from the National Church was threatened in case the decision of the Government should be unfavourable to the advance of religious freedom. The King, unfortunately, did not feel the force of these urgent demonstrations, nor understand the spirit of the times. He, who had taken under his especial protection the old Lutheran party, and even tolerated the exhibition of the Holy Coat at Trèves (which, as the Austrian newspapers asserted, their own government would hardly have done) persisted in his determination to favour Church faith at

* He died of the cholera last year.

the expense of philosophy and national theology, and refused to listen to any justification of rationalistic principles. He who, as the head of the Protestant Church, ought to have held the balance equally over all confessions, openly advocated the cause of a *single section of it—the Orthodox Church Party*. His minister Eichhorn went hand in hand with him. In the Conferences of the Evangelical Gustavus-Adolphus Society, held at Berlin in September, 1846, Rupp, who was elected as deputy for Königsberg, was excluded by a majority of votes. Many of the clergy who voted against him were no doubt ashamed of their un-Protestant narrow-mindedness and cringing for favour in high places; but a dread of offending their Sovereign and his minister was too strong to allow them to listen to their better feelings. The Free Congregation at Königsberg was only permitted to meet for devotional purposes in a private house, and officials who joined them were dismissed from their places. "A private individual," it was said, "is certainly at liberty to choose to what religious society he will belong, but not so an official." The answer given to the Magistrates and authorities of Breslau to their remonstrance was, "That they had put a wrong interpretation on the Cabinet order as to the union. That it had never abolished the obligation of subscription to the Symbolic Books—that the General Superintendents who had neglected to enforce it were much to blame, and that the present General Superintendent was right."

When the normal seminary at Breslau was broken up on account of its rationalistic tendencies, by a cabinet order from the king, the following announcement was made: "Instead of the attention hitherto given to their intellectual advancement in the education of teachers, especial care must in future be paid to the formation of their character and disposition. Those elementary teachers,

therefore, whose salary does not amount to a hundred dollars, are hereby informed that it will be raised to that sum, in the case of such as shall distinguish themselves by (a certain !) religious tendency."

Uhlich, whose very superior qualities, honourable views, and honesty of purpose gained for him the respect of many who differed from his religious opinions, was most ungraciously received by the King, to whom he made a personal application in favour of his congregation at Magdeburg. The alternative was offered him of either returning to the faith of the symbols and ritual of the National Church, or of leaving the latter altogether, and forming a sect with his adherents. Undismayed, he fought for a long time against this abuse of power. He felt himself too closely connected with the evangelical church, from which he was summoned to withdraw, by the living faith of his own conscience, to endure the thought of ceasing altogether to be one of her members. Still he could not resolve or feel it consistent with his duty to retract one single iota of his convictions, and do homage to the letter instead of the spirit. At length he was forced to yield to circumstances, and seceded from the Prussian National Church, but without any wish of ceasing to be a member of the Evangelical Church. However the Consistory and their orthodox servants, the hosts of Pietists in South and North Germany, might regard him as a heretic and sectarian—however the Prussian government might persist in closing against him the doors of the numerous churches in Magdeburg (which were for the most part empty)—millions of his countrymen who feel that the Spirit of God is awakening in these times, do not consider him and his followers as seceders, but have held out to him from a distance the right hand of fellowship, as the ardent champion of truth and justice. The respect of all the educated

classes in Germany, the love of his numerous congregations, who have always given him so many proofs of their independence and gratitude, will be a compensation to him for what he failed to carry out, and encourage him not to be weary in the struggle for the good cause. He cannot fail of ultimate success. The feet of those who will carry out the corpse of scholastic dogmatism, Jesuitical and Pietistic priestcraft, are already at the door. The most enlightened portion of Europe evinces a general determination to retain nothing in matters of religious belief which is not *true in itself* and therefore *eternal*, and to throw off the rest. No tampering will avail, no palliatives, no half-measures, no intermixture of the old and new. This Age demands the spirit, and will no longer cleave to the letter. Nothing now has any value which is not brought out practically in the life, which does not develop itself in the life, and which does not operate upon the life. The mere opinions of the schools are despised. No exclusive class of scholars will any longer enjoy a monopoly of knowledge—every man of education claims his share. On religious subjects especially, the educated layman is equally capable of forming a correct judgment with the priest and theological professor—more so, indeed, perhaps, because his mind, not being impregnated with the rust of black-letter learning, takes a far more sound and unprejudiced view of nature, life, and the progress of human history, than a sickly bookworm and pallid priest, who drives a profitable trade out of religion.

It is incomprehensible how so many professed scholars, who are cried up by the blind and ignorant multitude as theological Coryphæi, do not or will not see the signs of the times—how they reproduce, in a vast variety of forms, the old leaven, which the dogmatic smuggling in the service of the Prince of Darkness has foisted into the temple of

the world-redeeming religion of Jesus—how they still cling to this dry mummy, deck it out with all sorts of gewgaws, and endeavour by their different nostrums to restore its lost vitality. Let us take as an instance the celebrated Treatise on “Theological Ethics,” by Professor Rothe,* of Bonn, a man of the highest attainments, extraordinary pulpit-eloquence, and unimpeachable life. In this work, which formed the basis of his lectures at the University of Heidelberg, in speaking of the doctrine of the “latter days,” he has revived the Millenarian dreams of the first ages of Christianity. Professor Rothe supposes that “the soul goes down with the body into the grave, and remains in Hades, in a state of consciousness, till the resurrection, or second coming of Christ. In this state, those who have led a godless life on earth have still a day of grace, an opportunity of salvation and reconciliation with the Redeemer. If they profit by it, although they can have no place *within* the spiritualized world, they may be attached to it *externally*, to the extremities of the body of Jesus (as Gibeonites). If, however, they do not take advantage of it, they become “demonized” in Hades; and at the Last Day, when the grave shall give up its dead, being beyond the possibility of redemption, will be excluded from the pale of the spiritualized earth. Thus banished from the potentiating operation of the Spirit of God, they can only escape total and final annihilation by gradual, internal self-consumption. This process of self-decomposition into the original material elements is putrefaction—the putrefying process. Burning by fire, accompanied with extreme bodily sufferings, is the same

* He was promoted last year from the Theological Chair at Heidelberg to that of Bonn.

process in another form. The place of the damned can only be beyond the limits of the spiritualized world. From this they are expelled, and flee from it, indeed, with the utmost abhorrence, because *there* is God, the object of their bitterest hate, and because to them its spiritual light is a tormenting and consuming fire. In vain they seek in the universe a congenial spot to which they may resort, for they are the outcasts of creation. It is only in a sphere where the creative power of God has not yet completed its operation, where there is still a material chaos, that they can find a resting-place—consequently only within the spheres where the work of creation is only in the course of prosecution. Even there, however, though the creative process is only still in a state of fermentation, the Divine principle of organization prevents their resting, since they have voluntarily excluded themselves from its operation. The only spot now left them is the still (relatively) empty space, the void still unvivified by spiritual life. There they congregate with the damned of all the other worlds; and this very consociation with the whole demon world adds a new momentum to their pains." The final fate of the damned after these unutterable pangs of "soul and body," is a gradual dissolution, re-decomposition into "elementary matter."

Wild, fanciful, and extravagant as it must appear upon any philosophical hypothesis to attempt to lift the veil of the unseen world, and to submit even to minute analysis the process of dissolution of the material and spiritual components of the human organization—and such a description of it is fully warranted by his own declaration, that "at the coming of Christ the triumph of chemistry will be complete"—it is yet more preposterous to hope to establish any such system on the groundwork of the letter of

Scripture. If such latitude of interpretation as Professor Rothe has applied to the numerous passages from the New Testament cited in support of his theory be admissible—there is no possible view of the spiritual world, however opposed to his, which might not with equal reason be drawn from the same passages, which would seem to have no natural connexion with the inferences deduced by the author. The Popish doctrine of Purgatory, which he certainly does not hold, deserves, to say the least, as much consideration as his notion of the power of self-purification and consequent redemption in Hades, although we readily admit that the existence of Will is necessarily inseparable from the idea of life. Illogical, indeed, his reasoning cannot strictly be called, because it is not contradictory to the premises on which he argues—namely, the existence in Scripture of authority for building up *any* system of *post-mortem* philosophy whatever. We have no difficulty, however, in believing, that in many individual cases the spiritual sight has been so preternaturally opened and enlarged as to enable the Seer to hold direct communication with the spiritual world, and even to record the impressions communicated to him in that abnormal state. Neither do we dissent from the Professor's opinion, that inspiration is of much more frequent occurrence than is generally supposed. Differing, indeed, as we do altogether, from his views of the spiritual world, we should not be doing justice to Professor Rothe did we not express our conviction, that the metaphysical and moral portions of this work, which occupy the larger part of these volumes, are among the ablest and most profound productions of German literature.*

* Theologische Ethik. Three vols. Wittenberg, 1845—1848. In der Zimmermanschen buchhandlung.

3. GERMAN-CATHOLICS. — As the Hierarchical pretensions and Pietistic intrigues of the orthodox Church party, whom the ruling powers took under their especial protection, called forth a counter-movement in the Protestant Church from the *Friends of Light*, in like manner the re-establishment of the Papal supremacy and the arrogance of its officials, in the higher and lower departments, produced a reformatory movement in the Catholic Church, which vied in importance with the former. Such was the origin of German-Catholicism.

Ever since the grand catastrophe which terminated the domination of Napoleon in Germany, an idea had been floating on the minds of many educated Catholics, that the real essence of Catholicism was of a purer and more elevated kind than that of Rome. They felt, indeed, that the Catholicism which emanated from and was fostered at Rome was not genuine—that it was not the *Universal Religion*, in harmony and identical with original Christianity, but a peculiar form and conception of it—an aggregate of doctrines, usages, and abuses, whose manifold contradictions of the written Records of Christian revelation were unmistakeable evidence of their being the invention of priests.

Rotteck, in his *Universal History*, has expressed the opinion, that even *then* all sensible Catholics assented, tacitly at least, if not avowedly, to the ninety-five theses of Luther; and that if a reformer of *his Spirit* should arise, he would assuredly gain over nine-tenths of them. Even supposing that, judging from late events, the number of really enlightened Catholics is very much over-rated, it is nevertheless extremely rare to meet with an educated member of that Church, unless he be a hypocrite or Ultramontanist on principle, who will subscribe to all the articles of faith and practices of the Church of Rome, or dis-

pute the fact of her being in error in many particulars. The indisputable conclusion, therefore, is, that there is in the minds of enlightened Catholics, a higher ideal than is realized in their own Church. How, indeed, can it be otherwise? The Reformation, and its working on the human mind, exercised considerable influence on them as well as on the Protestants. The light which it shed abroad could not fail to enlighten even them; and in the course of three centuries they have silently overstepped the decrees of the Council of Trent, which enacted a code of doctrine, practices, and institutions, never to be altered to the end of time. Had the Church of Rome advanced *pari passu* with the march of civilization, had she satisfied the requirements of the educated portion of her members, by reforms which were called for by the spirit of the age, and especially of the nineteenth century, she might have maintained her authority for many generations, and have exercised beneficial influence on the whole European family. This precaution, however, she neglected. Stiff, uncompromising, and impregnable as she thought herself, she persisted with rigid consistency in the principles once adopted, ignoring and despising the progress of the human mind—the intellectual achievements of the last three centuries. Rome will not give way, but assert her supremacy as before. The same dogmas, the same ideas, still emanate from the Pope and his Conclave, even in exile, and though deprived of all temporal power. The Catechism promulgated for the Diocese of Mayence in 1844 was essentially the same as might have been drawn up three centuries ago. *The Church alone* has still the Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven, and out of it there is no salvation. Her Hierarchy is still infallible, and, if possible, more intolerant. It is this, however, which makes her fall inevitable. “She has tied her own hands by the dogma of Infallibility, so

that she cannot make a step in advance if she would." This, says the talented Carovè, is the tragical feature in the decadence of Rome, that her fall is effected by the very means which raised her to supremacy—namely, by adhering to the doctrine of Infallibility, and the maxim of never yielding. It is not to be supposed that the Roman Hierarchy are blind to the contradictions and dilemma into which they and the majority of their educated adherents are fallen. Cunning, watchful, and jealous, as she is, and ever was, she saw too clearly the danger that threatened her, and shuddered at the turn which events were taking, especially in Germany—the land of implicit obedience. As long as only single individuals opposed her, she was at ease; but when, after a long season of peace, new light broke gradually upon all classes of society, she was obliged to rouse herself for her last and most severe struggle. With a hopeful eye she looked to the great mass of the lower orders, who were still untainted by the prevailing spirit. The intellectual poverty, bigotry, and easily-excited fanaticism of the "stupid Germans," as the Italians call them, were the allies on whom she confidently trusted, when she unfurled her banners and made ready her weapons for battle.

The period at which the Church of Rome took the first steps towards the restoration of her power, and to re-action, was the return of Pius VII. to the old Rome, in 1814. It might have been expected that the Prince of the Church, whom non-Catholic as well as Catholic sovereigns had assisted to reinstate in his dominions, and re-establish in the Dignity of Head of the Catholic Church, would have shown his gratitude by putting an end to the unhallowed and un-Christian war waged against Schismatics and Heretics. In this, however, the world was woefully deceived. The old Enemy of Light did not abandon his

former stratagems and devices—he again summoned his ancient champions to the field, and burnished up the rusty weapons in his Ecclesiastical Armoury. The Jesuits were disinterred, or rather started up again out of their hiding-places. In troops, the Birds of Night crept out of the holes in which they had lain concealed, while Havoc was striding over the battle-fields; and, on the very spot where the Champions of Freedom had shed their blood, hastened to appropriate to themselves the harvest they had reaped with their swords. The brightest hopes of Germany were extinguished. The ecclesiastical relations in the different provinces which had been disturbed, were almost everywhere re-arranged by her crafty diplomatists to the advantage of Rome and the prejudice of the States—and the dangerous Spider threw her giant web over the minds of the trembling masses. Several remarkable phenomena of the times were powerful auxiliaries to the Court of Rome in her efforts and machinations. During the period of the Revolution, the prevailing religious tendency had been towards Free-Thinking and Incredulity—now that the danger was past, it fell into the opposite extreme, Bigotry, and romantic Mystical Sentimentality. The taste of the day was displayed in a returning fondness for Gothic Domes and the Poetry of the Minnesängers, and everything was tinged with a mediæval colouring. The study of classical antiquity was neglected, the sound basis of Philosophy, established by Kant, was abandoned; Gothic architecture was re-introduced—and Poetry degenerated into sickly, mawkish, and romantic ditties and Pietistic cant. Could mediæval Catholicism itself have been better supported by the Spirit of the Age?

The Romish Hierarchy found another auxiliary, in the course pursued by the Princes for maintaining their own authority. They still clung to the unfortunate prejudice,

that Popery was the best antidote against the revolutionary tendencies already beginning to exhibit themselves in Germany. They imagined, therefore, that the efforts of the Ultra-montanists might be available for stemming the rising current of Democracy—and accordingly favoured and supported it by all the means at their disposal.

The result was, that the Romish Propaganda made astounding progress in Germany. The age of miracles seemed to be returned. Prince Hohenlohe healed all manner of disorders—rheumatism and gout, deaf and dumb—the Nuns of Dülmen showed on their breasts, hands, and feet, the wounds of the Saviour, which bled every Friday. Maria von Mörl of Kaldern in the Tyrol lived without eating and drinking, and credulous Pilgrims flocked to her by thousands. Medals, Talismanic Relics of every kind, with a vast number of pamphlets, were circulated among the people, and proselytizing was pushed to a scandalous extreme. The Propaganda of the Jesuits especially, whose head-quarters were in Belgium, used every exertion in order to stir up the Catholic provinces of Prussia. This country had been for ages a thorn in the side of the Pope. He could never forget that the Rhenish Provinces were formerly the patrimony of the Church, and that Prussia herself was once the property of the see of Rome, and had been given by her as a fief to the German Orders. There also, especially, the poison of heresy was rapidly circulating. Prussia herself had grown powerful and prosperous under the spirit of Protestantism—and that of all things she could brook the least. Her principal arrows were accordingly directed against that country. The Prussian Monarchy, the first Protestant power on the Continent, was attacked almost simultaneously in the east and west by the archbishops of Posen and Cologne. The pretext for the quarrel was the

Mixed Marriages, and this, indeed, upon no unimportant grounds. By preventing these, they would naturally obviate the constantly increasing intermixture of Catholic and Protestant elements—so that, by withdrawing them from the influence of enlightened Protestantism, it would be no difficult task to induce the Catholics to lend more willing obedience to the maxims of the Roman See. The refusal of the Popish priests to give the benediction of the Church in cases of Mixed Marriages, was the prelude to future troubles. They threatened with hell and damnation such of the Catholic population as did not promise to educate their children in that religion, and exerted untiring activity in destroying the peace of families at Confession, by annoyances and vexations of every kind. This might have been sufficient intimation to the Prussian Government, that in the still pending negotiations with the Court of Rome it should require explicit explanation on this subject also. The Government, however, imagined that it would blow over, and be easily settled—and by a Cabinet order of 1828 declared the two Confessions to have equal rights, and enacted that, “in case of both parents agreeing as to the religious instruction to be given to their children, no one had any right to interfere.”

On the 28th of March, 1830, appeared the celebrated Papal Brief to the Bishops of Cologne, Trèves, Paderborn and Münster, in which was the following passage:—“Those who have the cure of souls are ordered to warn such Catholics as shall contract mixed marriages, to take care that it be a *true* and *valid* one, and to enjoin all such persons, especially women, that they do penance for the great sin of making a mixed marriage, and strictly carry out their obligation by using all their endeavours to give their children a Catholic education. Those who have the cure of souls are further enjoined to proceed with

great caution in this matter, that no opprobrium may be cast on the Catholic religion. That no penalties shall be inflicted by the Church on such as contract mixed marriages, but that the Clergy take care not to sanction them by the rite of Benediction, or by any other act which might seem to recognise their validity."

It was unnecessary for the Holy Father to take any further step. The Prussian Bishops were most active in enforcing these instructions to their fullest extent. None, however, pushed matters to extremes so much as the Archbishop of Cologne. Although, before his appointment, he had promised the Prussian government to show a spirit of charity and peace in regard to mixed marriages, he now exhibited a rigid determination to carry out the Papal Brief, and issued the strictest orders to his clergy on that head. This arrogant prince of the church made at the same time the most unjustifiable attack on the liberty of teaching in the universities. The lectures of the late Professor Hermes, who attempted to establish Catholicism on the speculations of Reason, instead of the authority of the Church, were particularly obnoxious to him. Out of hostility to all critical inquiry, he made an attack on the professors of Theology at Bonn, the friends of the deceased; and, in the style of the genuine Ultramontanists, exerted all his influence to put down all university education. Pretensions such as these at length obliged the Prussian Government to exercise their rights, and to prevent the capricious and wayward Prelates from using their official power to the prejudice of their fellow-citizens. In November, 1837, a detachment of Prussian troops appeared before the Archbishop's residence at Cologne, and removed the priestly disturber of the peace to Minden.

This act of the Government created immediate alarm

in Germany. The smouldering fire of Fanaticism burst into a flame, and disturbances took place at Münster, Paderborn, Cologne, Clèves, and other places. Shortly after, in the month of December, the Pope issued an Allocution, wherein he condemned in the strongest terms the proceedings of the Prussian Government. About the same period Dunin, Archbishop of Posen and Gnesen, put forward the same arrogant pretensions, and declared himself bound in conscience to follow the instructions of the Holy Father in regard to mixed marriages. He accordingly, without the knowledge of the Government, circulated throughout his diocese a pastoral letter, in which he threatened with suspension any priest who should give his benediction on such an occasion.

The fire kindled at Rome was thus communicated to both extremities of the monarchy, and placed the Government in no slight embarrassment. In vain the King issued one cabinet order after another; the Pope outstripped them all in the violence and boldness of his expressions against "the unheard-of audacity"—called heaven and earth to witness against the "wounds which the civil power was inflicting on the Church of Christ;" and in several Allocutions which followed in September, 1838, and July, 1839, set up claims and pretensions which remind us of the darkest periods of the Middle Ages, when the Papal power was at its zenith.

The Pope, in fact, seemed to have gained a great triumph. The results of the secret workings of the Jesuits' Propaganda were everywhere manifested. In the Grand Duchy of Posen, more especially, the aristocracy made a display of their dissatisfaction and of sympathy with the Church, when the refractory Archbishop was removed to Colberg. Associations of Catholic maidens were formed against the mixed marriages, and

the Polish ladies appeared in mourning. Upon the death of the King, in June, 1840, many of them laid aside their mourning, in order not to appear to wear it for the King, and the clergy refused to order the bells to be tolled on the occasion.

The contagion was not confined to the precincts of the Prussian monarchy. In Belgium and Bavaria more especially, and throughout Germany, indeed, there was hardly a village where the mischievous effects of this misunderstanding on the subject of the mixed marriages was not felt. In the event of such a connexion being formed, wherever a petty Ultra-montanist curate was to be found, dissensions, discord, and disunions were fermented among families; and, to the scandal of Humanity, it not unfrequently happened that marriages were prevented between parties who had already illegitimate children.

Fortunately, soon after the accession of the present King, the Prussian statesmen solved the difficult problem, and, without giving way in the slightest degree re-established peace with the Court of Rome, in January, 1842. Droste, indeed, was still Archbishop, but took no active part in Ecclesiastical affairs; and in regard to mixed marriages more lenient measures were adopted. The partizans of the Papacy exulted over their supposed victory, and the Reactionists held up their heads more boldly and triumphantly than ever. At Aix-la-Chapelle, an attempt was made to re-establish the great Auxiliaries of the Jesuits, the Sisters of the Holy Heart of Maria; at Cologne, they wished to introduce the Paris fraternity of the same order; and at Freiburg, in the Breisgau, the Sisters of Mercy were actually revived.

Emboldened by these successes, the Ultra-montanists began to think that they had only to strike one more decisive blow to annihilate Protestantism for ever. This

blow was struck by Bishop Arnoldi at Trèves. It was reserved for our times to witness this monstrous scandal! As if affected by sudden blindness, and anxious to fly in the face of the Nineteenth Century—despising and ignoring the vast efforts made in the three preceding it, the achievements made by the European mind in Science and Humanity—he commanded the bigoted fanatics to pay adoration to the *Holy Coat*. Protestants smiled at the buffoonery—educated Catholics deplored the fresh exposure their Church was making, and were more or less ashamed of the scandalous drama. But hundreds of thousands, who were not even so far enlightened, streamed up and down the Rhine to see these “gracious” Relics. Stories of extraordinary Miracles and Cures were circulated from mouth to mouth—in one place received with calm tranquillity, at another with deep seriousness—sometimes with a smile of pity at the holy simplicity of the believers, and fury and disgust at the Sacerdotal imposture—sometimes with pious belief and admiration. As is common at these festivals of the Church, indulgences were granted—but, as in Tetzels time, for money. The rich poured in offerings from their superfluity—the poor their last penny, so that vast sums were paid into the Sacred Treasury for the benefit of the Church and clergy. The Prussian Government, true to its principle of allowing every man to follow his own Faith, and having learned wisdom by the disagreeable occurrences at Cologne and Posen, offered no interference to the bishop and his coadjutors. All of a sudden, a public announcement appeared in the German newspapers, dated October 1, 1844, and headed, “Public Letter to William Arnoldi, Bishop of Trèves,” in which a bold, energetic, and straightforward remonstrance was made against the outrageous proceedings at Trèves, and the German people called upon no longer to endure

such buffoonery. The writer did not sign his name, but gave his address at Laurahütte, and stated himself to be a Catholic priest. If the document had emanated from a Protestant clergyman, it might possibly have passed without attracting much notice. But for a Catholic priest thus openly and boldly to remonstrate, was an event of the most novel and extraordinary character. The letter was circulated like wildfire through every town and village in Germany, and everywhere greeted with uproarious applause. It was in the hand of every peasant—it was read aloud in public places, and every voice was upraised in admiration. “A word in time,” said one—“a happy hit,” said another—“it has hit the right nail on the head.” Such was the reception it met with universally. The sensation caused by it, in fact, was not unlike that created by the ninety-five Theses of Luther. Reformatory movements soon commenced in various parts of the North of Germany, especially in Silesia. Many adherents of the Catholic Church declared their separation from her, and simultaneously almost the German-Catholic Congregations were formed. In the little town of Schneidemühl, in Prussian Poland, the whole congregation, with their preacher Czerski, went over to the New Community; and at Breslau, where the movement mainly originated, Ronge, the writer of the above-mentioned letter, who had thrown off his incognito, placed himself at its head, and boldly set about the work of reform. In the first instance, as must indeed have been the case, the reform was of a negative rather than a positive nature; that is to say, it consisted mainly in the removal of the Romish abuses. The following tenets were rejected—the Authority of the Pope as Head of the Church—Celibacy of the Clergy—Auricular Confession—Administration of the Sacrament in *one* element only, and Transubstantiation—

Baptismal Regeneration—Invocation of Saints—Picture and Relic Worship—Confirmation—Extreme Unction—the use of Latin in the Church Service—Sale of Indulgences—Purgatory.

Almost all the German-Catholic congregations agreed in abjuring these doctrines. Some few, especially those of Offenbach and Worms, subsequently decreed the "Repeal of the ungodly and inhuman Church Laws against members of other Confessions," more particularly as regards the so-called mixed marriages, and godfathers and godmothers.

They were, however, less unanimous when it became a question of drawing up *Positive Articles*—a general Confession of Faith, which was considered indispensable from the first. The Apostles' Creed, common to the Romish and Protestant Churches, did not suit the spirit of the new community. Accordingly, as early as October, 1844, the Congregation of Schneidemühl gave it up; and, in a few months after, Kreuznach, Breslau, Leipsic, Elberfeld, Offenbach, Dresden, Unna, Hildesheim, Berlin, Worms, and Wiesbaden drew up a new one, on a broader basis. It may be assumed that all German-Catholic congregations have a common belief in Scripture as the Authority for Faith and Rule of Life—the principle, in short, of the Protestant Church. In addition to this, the Leipsic Creed recognises the aid of "Reason, imbued with, and exercised according to, the Idea of Christianity." Hence it was the tendency of the new Church, in a theological point of view, to establish a system of *Supernatural Rationalism*—a system which combined Revelation (Scripture) and Reason, and admitted the conjoint authority of both in matters of Faith. The Orthodox Church element clearly predominates in the Schneidemühl Confession. It expressly admits, in terms similar to the Athanasian Creed,

the Divinity of Christ, the Holy Ghost, the Seven Sacraments of the Romish Church, Mass, and Transubstantiation; with this difference, that the Sacrament was to be admitted in both kinds. The Breslau Confession, on the other hand, is framed on a much broader basis; in which the Rationalistic element decidedly predominates. It was, in consequence, far more generally adopted, and in March, 1845, declared to be the general Creed of the New Community, at the Council held at Leipsic, which was attended by twenty-seven delegates of the German-Catholic Congregations. This Church admits only two Sacraments—Baptism, and the Supper of the Lord; the latter always in both elements. Baptism is the sign of admission into the Christian Covenant, and is performed on children, with the understanding that the Confession of Faith will be confirmed when they arrive at years of discretion. The Lord's Supper serves as a Remembrance of Christ, and as a sign of Universal Brotherhood. The essential part of the service consists in Instruction and Edification. Mass is celebrated in the Vulgar Tongue, and the worship generally arranged in conformity to the requirements of the times. The assistance of the Congregation, and their co-operation with the minister, are held to be essentially necessary.

The basis of the constitution of the Church is Congregational, as in the days of early Christianity. At its head are the Ministers and Elders, who are chosen every year at Whitsuntide. The maintenance of the clergy, and the requisite provision for the Church service, are supplied by a rate on the congregation according to their means. Neither these regulations, however, nor their Creed, are *established once for all*, but may be altered according to the circumstances of the times. It was a fixed principle of all the Congregations, that they did not form a new

Church or sect, but considered themselves Catholics as before.

It is evident that the spirit of the new Church Association in Doctrine, Life, Worship, and Constitution, bears considerable resemblance to that of the *Friends of Light*. Hence it accorded more or less with the views of a large portion of the educated members of both Confessions; and when its promoters, emerging from their retirement, and the quiet circle of their limited operations, stepped on to the stage of public life, and travelled over large districts of Germany, preaching their new doctrines, they were received with enthusiasm in the towns and villages, so that their mission was a scene of continual triumph. Wherever a German-Catholic preacher performed the service, the Churches were crowded to excess. Dinners and entertainments were given them wherever they went, at which speeches were made and toasts were drunk; and during great part of the summer of 1845, in all public places and companies, nothing was talked of but the religious movements of the day. The newspapers became Church journals rather than vehicles of political information. Even the peasants were more or less carried along with the stream of the movement, and became vehement partizans of one side or the other. In the Mixed Congregations, where religious feuds were heretofore unknown, and complete indifference prevailed, the old spirit of discord and disunion soon broke out. Lutherans became Lutherans again; Calvinists, Calvinists; Catholics, Catholics; and not unfrequently, from beneath the ashes, the glimmering spark of party and sectarian hate on the side of the Catholics burst out into a flame. The Ultra-montane priests, Jesuits and Romanists, naturally exerted all their zeal and energy against the modern Reformers and their adherents. They invoked the arm of the State to put

them down, invented all sorts of contemptuous and hateful sectarian names for the German-Catholics, and publicly and privately excited the bigoted populace, wherever they were within reach of their machinations, to acts of violence and persecution. In spite of their unceasing reactionary efforts, however, the success of the German-Catholics was extraordinarily rapid. Protestants lent their Churches to their Catholic brethren of a kindred creed for the performance of their service, and assisted them liberally in the furtherance of their designs. It was universally remarked, however, that the real essence of Christianity, the spirit of toleration and charity, was far more generally diffused among the laity than the clergy. While the religious virulence and intolerance of the latter was displayed in exciting disunion and hatred, the people held out the hand of fellowship to each other, although of different persuasions, in token of reconciliation and unity. Hundreds of thousands, in the meantime, went over to the new Community, and more doubtless would have done so—perhaps half the Catholics of Germany—had not the different Governments taken part with the Romanists, and shown direct hostility to the new German-Catholic Church. Unfortunately, also, the police, everywhere on the watch, detected in the new struggles for Reformation revolutionary political tendencies; and endeavoured, by every species of oppression and vexation to smother the spirit which seemed to them fraught with danger to the Government. In Bavaria and Austria, the German-Catholics were not even tolerated as a Sect. In the Constitutional States of South Germany, their religious acts were placed under the superintendence of Protestant clergy; and equal rights with other citizens—for instance, the appointment to public offices, and eligibility for election to the Chamber—were peremptorily refused them. In Prussia even,

where it was clearly the interest of the Government to favour the new element which had sprung up out of the bosom of the Romish Church, as a faithful ally against the pretensions of that Hierarchy, the neutrality which had been maintained in the first instance, and enjoined by an order of the 30th of April, 1845, was abandoned, and difficulties thrown in the way of the "Catholic Separatists." The conjoint use of the churches by Protestants and the adherents of the new Confession was positively interdicted. Meetings in the open air for the purposes of the German-Catholic Service were forbidden—Ronge and Czerski warned against "controversial preaching," which on the formation of a new religious party must necessarily take place, and was allowed to their opponents. Members of German-Catholic Congregations who held public situations, and who, upon changing their religion, received from the Government, in answer to their application, a notice that their promotion would not be affected by it, were, at the instance of their superiors, obliged to recant the obligations they had entered into with their co-Religionists. In a word, every step taken by the Prussian Government against the German-Catholics evinced a complete alteration in its views, and a reactionary tendency. The consequence undoubtedly was, that the progress of the movement was considerably impeded, so that in a few years it became effete. The times in which we live bear little resemblance to the early Christian ages—when, such was the enthusiasm in behalf of the interests of religion, that the great body of Christians were ready to make the heaviest sacrifices for their Faith, and even to subject themselves to martyrdom itself. In the present "Age of Material interests," it becomes a question for close deliberation and examination, whether the adoption of a new garb will not involve

the loss of existing advantages; and when this is likely to be the result, the adhesion to a New Church is abandoned in a thousand instances. Hence it was that a vast number of Catholics, who were in their hearts most favourably inclined towards the Spirit of German-Catholicism, from a variety of considerations, preferred to remain in the bosom of the old Church, rather than incur any risk by going over to the new.

So far from any progress being made, the German-Catholic cause has sensibly retrograded. Its failure, indeed, in particular instances, was entirely the fault of the preachers and heads of the congregations, partly from their incapacity, and partly their imprudent conduct. Kerbler at Frankfort, Würmle at Stuttgart, Scholl at Mannheim, and Dowiatt, at first so popular and now fallen into such disrepute, are strong instances in point. It does great honour to the Church, however, and evinces great tact on behalf of its members, that they have eradicated such Plague-Spots from the Body Corporate, and only intrusted the management of their affairs to men of Science and Moral worth. In spite of the contrary opinion entertained by a writer of such celebrity as Ger-
vinus,* it was a great misfortune for the New Community that some really great man, of high reputation and acknowledged merit—a Luther or a Zwingli—was not placed at their head at the commencement, under whose guidance all the different rays of religious light might have been made to converge towards one burning point. Any one acquainted with popular feeling knows what an effect an *individual* has upon the public. It expects and requires an intellectual and moral superiority on the part of those who are to be their leaders—in a thousand instances,

* Mission of the German-Catholics.

indeed, it confounds the individual with the cause itself. But woe to the cause when popular leaders exhibit too palpable evidence of "Humanity," and when, after the first burst of astonishment is over, the people are instinctively admonished that "Adam is become like one of us." Enthusiasm cools down with incredible rapidity—the Ideal melts away, and the stream, which at first impetuously overflowed its banks, dwindles down again within its former insignificant bed.

We do not mean by this to assert that there is an end of the German-Catholic Church, or that it has accomplished its mission and outlived its purpose. On the contrary, the sympathies of many excellent men are still devoted to it, as being the outbirth of an age, which, in Religion as well as Politics, is making a powerful effort for Freedom and Independence. It contains within it the germ of a grand development. It has broken through the narrow bounds of scholastic dogmatism, laid the foundation of a rational evolution of religious life within the Church of the People; *and thereby prepared the way for a future Union of the Separate Christian Confessions.*

In the political storm which has now been raging for many months, its quiet but continuous workings are all but forgotten. Religious subjects have ceased, for the nonce, to have more than a secondary interest to those important events which, stroke after stroke, have fallen with astounding rapidity on Germany, and engulfed all classes of society in one overwhelming stream. But when the fury of the thunder shall have abated, and Germany have celebrated the festival of her political regeneration—the same day will also witness the celebration of her religious Baptism—when Civil and Religious Liberty and the Union of all Confessions in one harmonious bond of brotherly love and humanity shall be the inalienable

trophy of Victory, wrung in many a severe conflict from Bigotry and Despotism.

4. **THE MISSIONARY SOCIETY.**—Christianity, in its original idea, was destined to be a Universal Religion. It was the purpose of its Exalted Founder that all the inhabitants of the earth should participate in the Light of Truth which He shed forth, and by Faith and Love be united in one vast Family. The Mission of Apostles to Nations who to this hour have not received that Light, is consequently the Spirit and Essence of this Religion, and has been practised at all times. On the first Institution of the Christian Church, these Missions were sent to Jews, Greeks, and Macedonians—to Asia Minor and to Rome. In later times, when the population of the Roman empire was already imbued with the elements of Christianity, Missionaries went to Britain, Germany, Scandinavia, and the Slave nations—and when, at length, the whole of Europe professed the Religion of the Cross, they extended their labours beyond Europe, on each side the Atlantic, into the Old and New World, to the remotest Islands of the Southern Ocean.

The Missionary Cause has made very marked and rapid strides during the last two centuries. As early as the year 1622, the Catholic Church founded an institution for propagating the Faith, of which Rome was the centre. Several Monastic Orders, the Jesuits especially, took a very active part in the Conversion of the Heathen ; and it must not be forgotten that they were the promoters of civilization in many parts of the world, for instance, Japan, China, the East Indies, and South America. They would doubtless have extended it still further, had they kept in view the real object of the mission—the propagation of pure Christianity. Their main aim, however, unfortunately was merely to extend the range of the influence of the Roman

Hierarchy. To effect this, and to gain over as many disciples as possible, great masses of the Heathen were frequently baptized without any previous fundamental instruction, and the conversions were often nothing more than the exchange of one superstition for another. With such a foundation of sand, the building could not fail of falling to pieces as soon as the builders ceased to labour on it.

Far more successful, accordingly, and productive of far happier results, were the missions sent out from Protestant countries. Among these, the German Brotherhood was most distinguished. Wherever the zeal and humanity of the missionaries of this fraternity impelled them, vast numbers of savages were gained over by their teaching and example to light and civilization.

Of the Protestant nations, the English and Germans have been the most zealous in propagating Christianity. In modern days, the inhabitants of the United States of America have rivalled them in the race of philanthropy and love. The result of their united labours has been, that at the present moment missionary institutions are a matter of universal interest. According to a calculation which may be depended on, there were about 1000 missionaries and 1700 native assistants at 400 stations in 1845. In Greenland and Labrador, on the coasts of Africa and the Deserts, among Hottentots and Kaffirs, among the slaves in the West Indies, and Free Indians in the Prairies of North America and the Brazils, among Kalmucks and Mongol Hordes in Central Asia, Hindostan, the Sunda Islands, and those of the South Seas, the self-sacrificing messengers of love have laboured with unwearied zeal for the propagation of the Gospel. The numerous Bible Societies co-operate with them in circulating the records of Christianity in almost every living

language—and have placed in the hands of their new converts thousands of copies of the Scriptures. With such a display of energy, and with such means at their disposal, and the united efforts of two such societies, it might have been expected that the results would have been proportionably auspicious. It appears, however, from the reports of the missions, that Christianity makes but little and slow progress among those who have previously been *acquainted with any other religion*. Out of a hundred and fourteen millions of Hindùs, in spite of the most unexampled exertions on the parts of most active missionaries, only two hundred congregations have been formed since 1705; in China and Japan, fresh persecutions of the Christians are constantly taking place to stop the progress of the good work. It is only in the South Sea Islands, the Friendly, Society and Sandwich Islands, where English and North American Missionaries have displayed a spirit of rivalry, even in their labours, which reminds us of the Apostolic Ages, that their operations have been satisfactory. It is there only that it can be said, that the Islanders are gained over for ever to Christianity, and have taken their place among the enlightened nations of the earth.

It is naturally foreign to our purpose to give even a sketch of the history of Missions and their results. It is only in their political, social, and religious connexion with Germany at large, and their bearing upon society generally, that we propose to say a few words. They form too important a feature to be omitted altogether in a notice of the religious movements of modern times.

Several large and small societies of this kind exist in Germany. After the establishment of a Missionary School at Halle, for the education of persons to be sent into foreign parts, a similar one was instituted at Basle,

in 1816, which had many supporters, especially in Württemberg; another at Berlin, in 1823, at Hamburg, and Barmen. The latter has been particularly active, and published in 1826 a *Missionary Journal*, containing full details of all matters connected with that subject. It likewise established a preparatory school for the Institute at Basle, for the purpose of training artisans who wished to dedicate themselves to the service of the missions; and in 1832, when they were joined by several other societies in Westphalia, and along the Rhine, became an independent society, under the title of the Rhenish Missionary Society, the aim of their labours being principally directed to South Africa. In regard to the religious views entertained by the German Missionaries, it is matter of great regret that they tend almost invariably towards Modern Pietism. The holders of these opinions consider the establishment of missions as an excellent instrument for the spread of their principles, and have had the talent of converting them into a Propaganda for circulating these opinions. The result was, that in Germany itself a religious movement of a very peculiar kind sprung into existence, which co-operated heart and soul with that of the Pietists. Under the pretext of converting the heathen, the alarm was sounded against Christians belonging to the Rationalistic party. Missionary meetings were formally convoked, to which the champions of Pietism flocked from all parts of Germany. They marched into the churches in pompous processions, preached, prayed, and sung religious hymns on the steamboats, and employed every sort of device to fan the flame of Fanaticism. Here, again, German good-humour and simplicity allowed itself to be over-reached and deluded. Vast sums of money were subscribed in behalf of converting the heathen; the poor gave fre-

quently their last penny, the women knit stockings for the Kaffirs and Bushmen, or made up another sort of garment for the Esquimaux and Greenlanders, while the children of the most impoverished families in the neighbourhood were suffered to beg in vain for the crumbs that fell from their table. Many reasonable, thinking persons, indeed, of the wealthy class, subscribed very liberally, without suspecting that the first object of their minister, who solicited and received their donations, was a crusade against Rationalism, to which the conversion of the heathen was subordinate. The consequence was, that most of the money collected went into the pockets of the Home Missionaries, who made the circuit of the towns and villages for the purpose of converting the "Worldlings." A regular trade, in short, was made of the Word of God. The wares were hackneyed about from house to house, from place to place, and the *commis voyageur*, who during his travels lived upon the hospitality of the Faithful, generally also came home with a full purse.

A large sum, nevertheless, was sent abroad ; and while many a hard-working labourer was ground down to the lowest wages, and the pauper left to starve, thousands and thousands were shipped away to foreign lands, for the benefit of the Chinese, Kalmucks, and Mandschus. And what was the result of these vast sacrifices? That here and there a Pariah or Puliah was made, not a Christian, but a Pietist ! The doctrine taught to these poor savages under the name of Christianity is, generally speaking, not the teaching of Christ, but a counterfeit imitation, which the dogmatical contrabandists smuggled in by land and by sea.

It is to be hoped, therefore, that the great catastrophe which has fallen upon Germany, and Europe generally, will

give the final blow to these unnatural missions; that when Political Freedom has been secured, and the interests of true Religion become once more the object of public solicitude, the German Nation, in their zeal for converting the Heathen, will in future take care that no hirelings, but faithful labourers, may be sent into the Vineyard, who will convey into Pagan lands the pure light of Christianity, of unadulterated Faith and true Brotherly Love.

5. THE EVANGELICAL SOCIETY OF THE GUSTAVUS-ADOLPHUS INSTITUTE.—Side by side with the Missionary Societies in the Evangelical Church, and within her own bosom, another association is in activity, not resting on the paltry grounds of narrow-minded Sectarian Bigotry, but the broad basis of true humanity and brotherly affection—one not forgetful of Home objects, while it promotes the interests of those at a distance. It is called the EVANGELICAL UNION OF THE GUSTAVUS-ADOLPHUS INSTITUTE.

On the 6th of November, 1832, the anniversary of the battle of Lützen, a considerable number of German Protestants conceived the idea of erecting a monument to commemorate that eventful day, and to perpetuate the memory of the never-to-be-forgotten Hero of Protestantism, who thus sacrificed his life for the cause of Evangelical Truth and Religious Freedom. The monument they proposed to erect was one more soul-stirring, more grand, and more enduring, than a statue of brass or marble. It was determined that the Institute should bear the name of the Royal Hero, and its main aim and object be to aid and support their distressed Protestant brethren by peaceful means, as, in a former Iron Age, the hero whose death they commemorated had assisted them with his sword. Continual complaints of poverty and distress, and repeated remonstrances against the ruthless persecution of the Pro-

testant Congregations, which were sent in, more especially from the non-Protestant States, viz. Austria, Bohemia, and Bavaria, recalled, with fearful earnestness, the words of the Apostle, "Let us do good, but especially to those who are of the Household of Faith." These words were made the motto of the New Aid-Society, and worked unlooked-for wonders in the Evangelical Church. At meetings of the members of the Association, originally held at Leipsic and Dresden, considerable sums of money were collected from time to time, and at once applied to the support of the oppressed Protestant Communities. So successful and encouraging a commencement was a new impulse to greater and more extensive activity. In the statutes confirmed on the 4th of October, 1834, by the Saxon Minister of Worship, as well as in the Annual Reports of the Society, a request was made and a hope expressed, that similar associations would be formed among *all Protestants*, which should co-operate with the Parent Society.

During the first seven years, however, no such societies were formed in Germany, with the exception of Saxony. In the country of Gustavus Adolphus alone was any sympathy displayed for the cause. Charles John, the late King of Sweden, in the year 1836, ordered a collection to be made from house to house, and in the Churches, for six successive years, in behalf of the society, throughout his whole Kingdom, which amounted to a very considerable sum. Germany, indeed, only required some particular occasion to call forth her sympathy in the benevolent work. This occasion presented itself at the Jubilee of the Reformation, in Darmstadt, when the Court preacher, Dr. Zimmermann, called upon all Protestants to join the Association. In consequence of this appeal, a meeting was held in September, 1842, at Leipsic, in order to deliberate

on the course to be pursued, of which the official reports give the following results :—

1. The Gustavus-Adolphus Institute, and all Societies hereafter to be formed for the same purpose, shall be incorporated into one Association, under the title of the **EVANGELICAL SOCIETY OF THE GUSTAVUS - ADOLPHUS INSTITUTE.**

2. Three *ad interim* Parent Societies, at Leipsic, Dresden, and Darmstadt, shall undertake the management alternate years—the Central Treasury and Archives remaining, as heretofore, at Leipsic. When more parent Societies are formed, there shall be a Central Committee, which shall sit constantly at Leipsic.

3. On the basis of these Resolutions, Statutes shall be drawn up, and laid before the next general meeting at Frankfort.

This general meeting was fixed for September, 1843, and then held. The statutes agreed upon and adopted on that occasion are too long to be given *in extenso*. The following were the essential points which it may be necessary to notice.

The Evangelical Society of the Gustavus-Adolphus Institute, is a union of all those members of the Evangelical Protestant Church who have at heart the relief of their brethren who are without means of religious instruction, and are therefore in danger of being lost to the Church. Their object is to use all their energies in supplying the wants of their co-religionists in and out of Germany, whenever they are unable to find assistance in their own country.

The operation of the Society embraces members of the Lutheran, Reformed and United Churches, as well as those congregations which can give satisfactory proof of their agreement with the Evangelical Church.

All the regular subscribers join the Associations, either Aid or Parent Societies. The common centre of management of all the individual societies is the Central Committee which sits constantly at Leipzig.

In every state, and in large countries in every province, there shall be one Society recognised as the Chief with which all the others shall be incorporated as Branch Societies.

Any person may be a member of the Society, on undertaking to pay an annual and voluntary subscription; and shall continue to be so, so long as he continues to pay his subscription.

The working of the Gustavus-Adolphus Society spread with incredible rapidity throughout Protestant Germany. It was at once a great and practical idea operating on the spirit of the times, which could not fail to find a response, in the then state of religious feeling, wherever there were Protestant communities. In Austria and Bavaria alone it met with no sympathy, not because the Protestants in those countries took less interest in the cause, but because those Governments strictly prohibited their subjects from taking any part in it. In Bavaria, indeed, the Government adopted so hostile a position towards it, that they contemplated establishing a Tilly Society in favour of the Catholics, in opposition to the Gustavus-Adolphus Society, from which the persecuted Protestant congregations were strictly forbidden to receive any assistance. Acts of kindness, in a word, were neither allowed to be performed nor accepted! These barbarous restrictions, however, at which humanity shudders, had the direct effect of increasing the activity of the society. From them, indeed, as well as the reports transmitted from the sufferers themselves, the distress of the Evangelical brethren, who were scattered abroad, became known, and assistance was the

more promptly and liberally supplied, in proportion to the compassion, sorrow, and indignation, excited in their behalf. The annual accounts showed every year a considerable increase in the funds of the Association, and, as supplies were granted to the distressed with the greatest circumspection and prudence, in many cases their wants were not only mitigated, but completely provided for. At the annual meetings of the Society, great numbers of letters and deputations were received, expressing in the liveliest terms the thanks of the recipients, so that the interest in the Association grew into positive enthusiasm, and the members vied with each other in the labour of love with a rivalry which produced the most remarkable results. Such notable success could naturally not be matter of indifference to the enemies of the Protestant cause—the Jesuits and Romanists. On all sides, far and near, malicious charges and insinuations were circulated against the Society. The Ultra-montanists saw in this pure act of humanity—in this association, which was formed without any animosity towards those who entertained different opinions, a subtle combination to the prejudice of the Catholic Church—a conspiracy to make a general crusade against her, and were accordingly no little exasperated at the vital energy exhibited in the Protestant Church. That Church, in a word, which had been heretofore so divided in its interests, and split up into so many religious parties within its own pale, all at once, without note of preparation, had found one common centre of union and operation. The spiritual band which was thrown round churches and congregations externally separated was drawn tighter and closer. At the smaller and larger meetings of the Branch and Parent Societies, members became better acquainted with each other, and by new interchange of ideas and feelings,

learned to consider each other more and more as members of one body, whom individual discrepancies of opinion on dogmatical questions or religious professions ought not to alienate and disunite. In short, the vast chasm which had separated Protestants was filled up—a step was taken, hitherto unparalleled in history, towards the realization of the Kingdom of God upon earth. *Love had united those whom faith divided.* The Reformed Church and Lutherans, Rationalists and Pietists, those of the Old and those of the New Faith, Churchmen and non-Churchmen, were associated in the *one* main object of all Christian Life—in mercy and kindness; and even the clergy, whose unhappy controversial spirit has in all ages created dissensions, were *for some time* animated by those words of peace, which one of the most excellent among them addressed to the two contending parties:—“You ought to consider yourselves as a married couple, who, when on the very point of separation, feel that they must continue the connexion *for the children’s sake.*”

“For some time,” we have said, and yet not long. The Evil One, who never sleeps, and who in the night sows tares among the wheat, as in a thousand other instances, made use of the very men who appeared the most actively employed against him, for promoting his own ends. The season arrived for the *Fifth Annual Meeting* of the Gustavus-Adolphus Society at Berlin, the 7th, 8th, and 9th of September, 1846. The Parent Society of the Province of Prussia, at Königsberg, had elected Dr. Rupp as one of its representatives—the same individual who, as already remarked, had been dismissed from his post as divisional preacher, and expelled from the Prussian Consistorial Church, and was the Founder of the “Free Congregation” at Königsberg. The question was raised whether he could be received as repre-

representative of the society, protests having been sent in from several Societies against his eligibility. Out of twelve members present on the morning of the 7th, ten were of opinion that he was ineligible, according to the statutes, by which none but members of the Evangelical Protestant Church could belong to the Society. After a deputation, sent to endeavour to persuade him to secede of his own accord, had failed in their mission, the question was again discussed at a full meeting of the representatives, and Rupp was formally excluded by a majority of 39 to 32.

The news of this event produced in the Protestant world the effect of a spark thrown into a barrel of gunpowder. The Orthodox and Pietists exulted, for it was their party who had gained the victory. The Liberals and unprejudiced persons, on the other hand, were grieved beyond measure at the un-Protestant narrow-mindedness and Hierarchical arrogance exhibited by the majority of the meeting. A violent storm was immediately raised in the newspapers. A vast number of protests and remonstrances were published by the different branch and parent Societies against the resolution. The meeting was very justly charged with having introduced into the Society a controversy with which it had no concern. Great blame was thrown on them for having constituted themselves a Tribunal of Faith, and for having, in that capacity, pronounced an anathema against one of their members. It was openly stated, (and it turned out, indeed, subsequently to be true) that the majority which expelled Dr. Rupp, had voted under the influence of the Prussian Government, especially of the minister, Eichhorn, and that in yielding to such influence, they had displayed most unworthy servility. A strong appeal was made to have the Resolution rescinded and the Statutes altered—a threat

even was held out that the subscriptions would not be paid, or that a large portion of the members would secede from their Society if these suggestions were not complied with.

The other party, again, approved highly of the Resolution, and maintained its absolute necessity, in order to prevent the line of demarcation of membership from being violated. Those who voted against Dr. Rupp were lauded as the only true friends of the Association, inasmuch as they had offered their testimony thereby in behalf of the Evangelical Creed—a thing so needful in these days of weak faith.

The breach would probably have been irreparable, and a total break-up of the Society have ensued, had not the more intelligent members united their efforts to pacify the disputants, by holding out hopes of something being done at the next general meeting, fixed to be held at Darmstadt. This took place in September, 1847, and was attended by a vast number of clerical and lay members. Dr. Rupp was re-elected for Königsberg, but voluntarily resigned, for the sake of peace and concord. The grand impediment to a quiet arrangement was thus removed. The negotiations, indeed, were carried on with great prudence, and in a true spirit of reconciliation. Many excellent and affecting speeches were delivered by various members, which had the effect of so far calming down and allaying the excitement, that the following resolutions were come to:—

1. In future, the qualification of a representative to the Central Committee shall be tested solely by the act of appointment.

2. That, on the other hand, it is unquestionably competent to the General Meeting to pass a resolution, in any case that may occur, as to the inadmissibility of a repre-

sentative on account of his not fulfilling the requirement of the statutes.

3. Nevertheless, that in case such a resolution shall be passed, in respect to a representative who asserts his qualification to be a member, it shall not take effect till the next general meeting, after a preliminary hearing before his own individual Society.

These resolutions had the effect of re-establishing concord in the Gustavus-Adolphus Society, and it has ever since continued to flourish, and extend the sphere of its utility to the Evangelical Church. According to the latest reports, it has distributed since its first establishment at least 25,000*l.* in aid of the distressed brethren of the Protestant Faith. May the sympathy of all the friends of religion, even in these stormy times, not merely continue undiminished in support of this highly-favoured institution, but the number of its members be increased from year to year, and its means of beneficence be proportionably augmented.

We have thus attempted a sketch of the more prominent features in the destinies and movements of the principal religious parties professing Christianity in Germany, carried down to the memorable year whose sands have just run out. Of Judaism, in its old Rabbinical form, and the seceders from it, who seem to have done little more than abandon many of the time-honoured institutions of their forefathers, without engrafting anything new on the old stock, important as this step may become to Christianity itself, it does not enter into our purpose to speak. It is simply a negation. The same tendency to change, however—the same impatience of obsolete forms and ceremonies, is visible even in the crystallized rigidity of the Jewish, no less than in that

of the more flexible Christian mind. Even there, where no consciousness of the necessity of positive religious life and vital energy is evinced, dead formalities have lost their efficacy, hallowed as they are in the Jewish Dispensation by hoary antiquity, and national faith in their Divine origin.

Incomplete, however, as this sketch must be under any circumstances, it would lose its main interest, if it were confined merely to Germany as it was before the year 1848. Events, to which the pages of History will hardly furnish a parallel in centuries, have been crowded into a few months. Their results, on the other hand, may have an influence on the world for centuries. The inquiry, therefore, will naturally be made, what have been the effects of these momentous catastrophes on the religious mind? Have they left a chaos behind them, or is there any indication of a more healthy tone being produced in the Intellectual and Moral temper of German Thought? In answer to such inquiries we would reply, that in the sphere of Religious excitement, the changes have been as rapid, if not of such immediate importance, as in the political world. In the South of Germany, especially, the conflict of political opinions and revolutionary tendencies produced, in the first instance, an entire prostration of all religious sentiment. Complete indifference, to say the least, was manifested in the masses of society to any external profession of Christian Faith and Worship. The churches were everywhere deserted—the most popular and eloquent preachers were almost without congregations. There was, however, more than apathy exhibited. Atheism was openly avowed, and Christianity ridiculed as the invention of Priestcraft, into which, indeed, it had too frequently degenerated. At a meeting at Wittenberg, of which we shall give some account hereafter, a clergyman

of the highest respectability informed his audience, that never had the prevalence of public and private demoralization been so fearful as at that hour. He drew an alarming picture of the diseased state of the public mind, which he ascribed to the total disruption of all moral and religious ties. Neither was this confined to particular individuals or particular districts. He spoke of the numerous avowedly Atheistic Societies, which, emanating from Paris and Switzerland, had thrown their coil over the whole of Germany. He spoke of the poison they circulated in the most licentious and irreligious pamphlets, the activity of their agents, and especially of the leaders, one of whom had styled himself "the personal enemy of God," and whose motto generally was, "War against all Authority, Order, Property, and Civilization." Neither were these doctrines disseminated without method, nor did the holders of them scatter them broad-cast wherever a favourable opportunity seemed to present itself. The organization was complete. The members of these destructive confederacies were initiated under an oath of abjuring all Faith in God, allegiance to princes, and respect for Law and Property. They declared war against the Human Race, while they defied the Power and denied the very existence of a God.

It will, indeed, excite some astonishment that Governments and Sovereigns, who had used in the most arbitrary manner their influence and authority to force upon unwilling consciences a subscription to Articles and Creeds, in the narrowest and most bigoted sense, should have taken no efficient step to check the rampant depravity of this monstrous brood. Their existence was no creation of a moment. They had been in active operation for many years. The clergyman in question stated, that their machinations had been for a long period matter of public

notoriety. "They have long," he said, "been well known to myself. I have for years, in the exercise of my calling, been acquainted with these hidden *officinæ* of demoniacal fire—have shuddered as I watched these volcanic *foci* of a spirit at enmity with God, and burning with hate towards man—this school of crime and abomination. I have seen for years that the ground was undermined, and that society stood upon a hollow pitfall, which must inevitably soon fall in beneath our feet."

With such a preparation for the political and religious Saturnalia, it is not surprising that, when the crisis arrived which ushered in the former, the latter should not lag far behind. It is perhaps extraordinary that matters were not pushed to even more outrageous extremities. As far as we are aware, no desecration of the churches took place—no personal insults or violence were offered to the clergy, although the connexion between Church and State was abrogated by the Legislative body at Frankfort at an early stage of their deliberations. This circumstance, perhaps, tended more than any other to rekindle the spark of religious feeling, which was not quite extinct, and to rouse from their lethargy the apathetic but sincere believers in the necessity of maintaining a form, as well as the spirit of religion. The Protestant clergy felt that, in their isolation from the State, and with the prevailing indifference to religion, not only they should be left without provision, but the greater part of the churches in Germany be closed altogether. Even in the country villages, where some little respect was still preserved for their pastor and their church, they had no security for the continuance of the humble stipend which satisfies their necessities—not less on account of the inability, than the unwillingness of their parishioners to provide it. They felt also very strongly the unfavourable position in which they would

be placed as compared with the Church of Rome. At the Reformation, the Protestant Princes of Germany took into their own hands the Estates of the Church, and paid the stipends of the clergy out of the public purse. With the exception, therefore, of very trifling Surplice Fees, they are wholly dependent on the State for the very necessities of life. Not so the Church of Rome. She still retained her property, and allowed no interference of the secular power with her revenues and administration. The separation of Church and State, therefore, could not otherwise affect her, than as it deprived her of supremacy, and raised all other religious professions to equal rights with herself. This disadvantage, however, was more than counterbalanced by the influence she derived from her vast pecuniary resources, as compared with the poverty of the Protestant clergy. This would naturally operate very injuriously to the latter by increasing the power of the Romish priesthood, and thereby drawing many proselytes within the pale of that Church. In a word, it was universally felt that the two great dangers by which Protestantism is threatened are, the prevalent spirit of Unbelief on the one hand, and Popery, even in her present languishing condition, on the other.

Stimulated by these considerations, at the very moment when civil war was raging around them, a numerous body of persons, clergy and laity, from all parts of Germany, assembled at Wittenberg in the latter end of last September, for the purpose of devising some expedient to arrest the progress of the evil. The place selected for this Evangelical Conference could not well be more auspicious. Protestantism, nay, Religion itself, was at stake, and where could the cause in behalf of which they were to deliberate be so likely to call forth sympathy and enthusiasm, as within the hallowed precincts where the bones of Luther

and Melancthon are interred? Whatever may be its results, the meeting was not an unimportant one. The interchange of ideas among so large a number of the most distinguished clergy of Germany, and an equally respectable body of laymen, differing as they did on many points of Form and Doctrine, but agreeing in the main upon the question at issue, could not fail to exercise beneficial influence on the excited auditory, who for three days thronged the Castle Church of Wittenberg. It is, indeed, to be hoped that the effects will not be confined to the walls of the sanctuary within which the two heroes of Protestantism sleep; but that they will be felt beyond the door on which the Theses of Luther were promulgated, and the Cathedra from which he preached.

Several Committees had been previously formed in different parts of Germany, and Conferences been held for the same purpose as that upon which the one now assembled at Wittenberg was summoned to deliberate. It was proposed to establish a German Evangelical Confederation, which should comprise all Churches based upon the Reformed Confessions. Most of the religious parties we have already described were, indeed, excluded by the terms of the Resolutions. The basis on which the Confederation was formed would seem a very narrow one for such an emergency—too narrow, in truth, to be Catholic, and the principles on which it proceeded too exclusive to promise a lengthened vitality. It is singular that, under the pressure of danger so imminent to the very existence of religion, a more comprehensive measure was not proposed—one, at least, which would have embraced a larger circle of persons interested in the common cause of moral and religious life, though differing widely on the means by which these may be most powerfully supported and advanced. It arose, however, probably from the composition of the

Assembly itself, which consisted, for the most part, of the Orthodox and Pietistic party, whose majority was so overwhelming, that any opposition, having in view the admission of Churches which do not profess some of the Evangelical Confessions, would have been entirely hopeless. It is to be lamented that men of moderate views and sincere well-wishers to religion, among the liberal school, who cannot be wanting in Germany, should have absented themselves on this occasion. It is always unfortunate when there is too much unanimity in great emergencies. A little opposition cannot be otherwise than advantageous, if it were only to prove that, however sincere and enthusiastic men may be in furthering a cause, there will always be a difference of opinion as to the plan to be pursued among those who do not themselves take part in the proceedings. Large bodies, especially, are apt to forget this in moments of excitement, and to fancy that all the world must think with them. So it was on the present occasion. The step taken, indeed, is in a conservative direction—an attempt to collect together the *disjecta membra* of the various Provincial Churches in a bond of unity or brotherly love, co-operating for the same ends, and animated by the same spirit, though neither exhibiting an unity of Form of Worship, nor uniformity of Creed and Doctrine. Should this object be attained, and the nucleus of a more extensive central organization be formed, much good will be effected. It is to be feared, however, that the meeting was of too one-sided a character to induce any large number of persons to join their ranks at the present moment. In the present temper of society, it cannot fail to be stamped as reactionary, and to provoke opposition, unless it should die a natural death from want of support or notice. This will be matter of regret, because, although the course pursued might have been advantageously modified, it was the

strong sense of the necessity of combination against a dangerous enemy which led to the Conference ; and those dangers are no less imminent at this hour.

As regards, however, the form of worship and the creeds of individual Churches, no interference was proposed. Each is to retain its own independent action, while aiming at a common unity of interest and exertion. Nor is there anything novel or contradictory in such a proposition. It is the Law of Nature—of Divine Order—that different and even opposite elements shall tend towards a common unity. The Manifold may, indeed, appear to be Antagonistic, and the Antagonistic, again, to be Manifold ; but this is only an appearance. In the Law of Nature, the ultimate form of the Manifold is necessarily a Unity. The aim, therefore, of this Association, was to carry out this general law as regards the elements of Christianity, and to impress upon all Christian communities the necessity of co-operating, to direct towards a common centre all the atoms now floating about in mutual collision. In a word, the object was to combine independence with unity. “The time is come,” said Nitsch, “in face of the Legislature and the ‘Spirit of the Age,’ to assert that Christians in Germany do not consider Christianity as an individual feeling—as a philosophical religion—as a mere moral tie, unconnected with the idea of a church. We must declare, in the most decisive terms, that Christianity is not a growth in the soil of Human Nature and Art, but a Divine Fact. The more strongly the Manifold Elements in her Constitution are adduced as arguments against her unity, the more tenaciously the separative tendencies are maintained, and the more the necessity of these peculiarities is insisted on, the more important it becomes for every Christian to endeavour to evince that, in spite of the separation, there is likewise a grand

and virtual real unity in the Evangelical Faith and Confession."

In conformity with the acts of the Reformation, each of the different Confessions was described as containing the principle of Unity, inasmuch as they have all a common interest in opposing the Church of Rome, the Anarchists who reject or despise Church Ordinances, and such as identify Christianity with Rational and Natural Religion. So far the Unity is merely *negative*. It has, however, a *positive* side, inasmuch as they all agree in "the Divine Revelation of Scripture, the Divinity of Christ, the immediate Relation of Believers to God and Christ—the Universal Priesthood of Believers, the free use of the Bible, Ordination to the Ministry, Infant Baptism, the Sacrament, and necessity of Church Ordinances." It was, however, considered sufficient to obtain the Evangelical consent of all parties to the Confederation, without drawing up articles of union, and with a clear understanding that no attempt should be made to force into subscription those Churches which, on objective grounds, entertain conscientious scruples against individual doctrines or forms of discipline.

Dr. J. Müller argued the necessity of forming a Church Confederation, more especially on political grounds,—viz., on account of the Separation of Church and State. He maintained that, by abolishing the obligation to profess any Religious Faith, and by rendering Civil Rights independent of Religious Confessions, the State declares her indifference to *all* Religious Communion. While, in America, every Government officer must avow his belief in a God, and a future state of rewards and punishments—while Robespierre and the Convention decreed the Recognition of the Supreme Being—Germany, he said, has placed Atheism on the

same footing with Faith, and refuses to offer an opinion on the Faith and Authenticity of Christianity. The State, in short, declares that she has no religion.

It is obvious, from the tenour of these discussions, that great danger is apprehended from the disavowal by the Legislature of all connexion between the Government and Religion. Some of the speakers, indeed, intimated that the separation of Church and State was treated too much as a *fait accompli*, but no difference of opinion appeared to exist upon the point, supposing it to be absolutely decided. The great additional influence resulting from such a measure to the Church of Rome was still more strongly insisted on, than the increasing tendency to Unbelief, Indifference, and Sectarianism, which is among the many evil effects anticipated. The alarm as to the old question of the Mixed Marriages and Education is revived; and the interference of Priests and Jesuits in the affairs of common life is looked upon with horror, as the death-blow of Civil Liberty.

Whether such views be exaggerated or not, we simply record the fact, that among that large and respectable body assembled at Wittenberg these were the almost unanimous impressions. It would naturally, therefore, be expected, that great enthusiasm should be evinced in favour of adopting some means of counteracting the impending evils. Here, however, is the great difficulty. Excellent as was the tone of the discussions, and ably as the various topics were argued by the distinguished and eloquent persons who addressed that meeting—when the question of deciding upon a plan of operations was proposed, a variety of objections were instantly started. The seeming concord vanished, as soon as the debate commenced on the system to be pursued and the Resolutions to be adopted. There were those who feared that too much

unanimity would prevail, and that too little discussion would ensue in consequence. This was, however, far from being the case, although the final arrangements were very harmonious. The opponents of the proposed Confederation based their objections principally on the following points. They argued that the Evangelical Church is the Church of Truth and Freedom, inasmuch as it embraces everything which is Christian Truth, even in Roman-Catholicism : whereas, from the proposed Confederation, the Evangelical elements in Roman-Catholicism were necessarily excluded. By this course, the Evangelical Church would be narrowed and particularized. Those who argued thus recommended an association of individuals holding the same tenets, rather than a Confederation of Churches, which must be necessarily exclusive, and therefore not Catholic. Those, again, who supported a Congregational, rather than individual union, asserted that such an association would be inoperative unless backed by the Congregations themselves ; and they asked what reason there was to suppose they would be so supported ? This could hardly be the case, when nine out of every ten persons had abjured their Faith—so that the attempt would fail, and be a fresh triumph to Unbelief. An Evangelical Alliance was proposed, therefore, instead of a Church Confederation. There were others who thought that the question should be treated politically ; and that, instead of accepting the Separation of Church and State as a thing decided, they should combat the revolutionary tendencies of the Legislature, as, in the then excited state of the public mind, more was to be gained by treating it as a political, rather than a religious affair. The feeling of the majority, however, was, that it was inexpedient for them, as a religious body, to mix themselves up with the question of Politics.

After a very lengthened debate, during which the advantages of both systems were very eloquently maintained by the different speakers, Stahl summed up by stating, that the object of the meeting was to establish neither a uniform system of Church Discipline and Doctrine, to which every member of the Association should be obliged to subscribe unconditionally—nor, on the other hand, a mere individual union, such as an Evangelical Alliance *must be*, but something between the two—namely, an Evangelical Church-Confederation, each member of which should be independent, and at liberty to adopt such forms and creeds as it should think fit. This proposition was ultimately carried by acclamation.

The form of the Resolutions, again, produced considerable difference of opinion, and especially the one relating to the qualification for membership, “all Church Communities standing on the basis of the Confessions of the Reformation.” This led to a very long discussion. The words were thought by some too indefinite and yet too exclusive, as every one who holds the doctrine of Salvation through Christ ought to be welcomed into the Confederation. Others maintained, that they were speaking of churches and not of individuals, and that such as are really Evangelical cannot object to the words used, either as being indefinite or exclusive. It was contended that it was absolutely necessary for a Confederation, formed strictly in the spirit of the Reformation, to adopt a Confession which shall be a distinctive mark of the Reformation; and that if any restriction at all be imposed, it is impossible to couch a Resolution in more general terms. It was, indeed, thought very desirable by many that a more strict act of uniformity should have been drawn up, but this was clearly impossible amid so much difference of opinion: a preliminary meeting, indeed,

such as that at Wittenberg, was incompetent to decide upon Articles of Faith for a whole Confederation. To obviate the inconveniences and questions which might arise as to a mere declaration of subscription to the Evangelical Confession conferring rights of Membership, as was the case in the Gustavus-Adolphus Society, a change was introduced, requiring the consent of the whole body before any individual Church could join the Confederation.

A more practical and vital proposition, however, than any question of Resolutions or Articles was brought forward by Wichern, of Horn, near Hamburg, without which, no lasting results could be anticipated from the present movement. It was the organization of a Home Mission, for the purpose of arousing the German nation from their apathy and indifference, and giving a new stimulus to their moral and religious sensibilities. In a most eloquent speech, in which he depicted in the darkest colours the present state of morals and religion, he argued that no real good could be effected unless this was done systematically in the name of the whole Confederation. "Much," he said, "has been done by individuals, but from want of combination it has produced no results. A central organ must be established, which shall comprehend all Germany within the sphere of its operation. Let it not be supposed that this is aiming at too much. Take courage from England's example. England, and London especially, had its firebrands, its Chartist meetings, its risings and disturbances. Why were these risings powerless and abortive? Because a large number of philanthropic individuals formed an Association for visiting the poor and the uneducated—the haunts of vice and criminality, in the worst districts of London, and by their teaching and instruction inspired a moral lesson into the dangerous

classes of society, which has tended, for the present at least, to ward off the evil day. Our only hope is in the Church Confederacy. The centralization of the efforts of benevolent Christians can alone protect us. Neither the State nor Legislation can avail anything, and this is admitted by the most enlightened Statesmen themselves—the Church alone can effect that which it is her especial province and duty to perform. The Evangelical Church is built upon the true foundation of Christian Love, but is wanting in active exertion and combined operation. Individual assistance has been freely offered in furtherance of this Labour of Love. Since the month of March, more than 50,000*l.* have passed through my own hands to promote these objects. Many persons of large fortune have thought it their duty to sacrifice their whole property, in times like these, to assist in *paying off an old debt due to the people*. But that is not enough. *The Church must become a Church of Love, a people's Church*—must have pity upon the poor, and thus, by incorporating the Ethical with the Dogmatical elements, complete the Second Act of the Reformation.”

A Committee was accordingly appointed to prepare a plan of operation, and report to the next meeting what was necessary to be done, and how it was to be carried into effect. They were instructed to ask the assistance of persons of all classes—Statesmen, Professors, practical men, both clergy and laity, in order that, by one united effort on the part of the whole community, the good work might be commenced under the most favourable auspices.

On the last day of the meeting, the discussion was opened by Krummacher as follows :—

“The idea of an Evangelical Church Confederation has been greeted with acclamation. The picture stands clearly before us; but we must take away with us to our

homes something real, an abiding treasure. We shall do so, if this meeting respond in the affirmative, with one heart and one soul, to the three questions I am about, in the name of thousands, to propose. Are we all here assembled, in these days of unfaithfulness, ready, like Peter, to exclaim in answer to the question proposed by our Lord to his Disciples, when many fell away from him — ‘Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of Eternal Life. We believe and confess that Thou art the Christ, the Son of the Living God.’ Have we, in these days, entered into a covenant with Christ Jesus, our only Saviour, from the ground of our hearts?

“Are we determined, through the grace of God, to abide in the spirit which has animated this meeting; loving one another, encouraging one another, remembering one another in our prayers, striving with one another for the cause of the all-sanctifying Gospel, and supporting one another in the conflicts in which we are engaged?

“Do we all recognise one another from henceforward as brethren in Christ, as members of one family, and do we consider the names of those here assembled as a Family Record of Love, of Confidence, and Consolation, so that when the time of Persecution comes, those who are assailed for the Truth’s sake may have full assurance of receiving support and protection from their brethren till the fury of the oppressors be passed by; and that those who may fall in the conflict, or be called upon to suffer martyrdom, may point towards their wives and children, and say confidently to all—Behold your sisters, behold your children?

“If here in this Sanctuary, in the presence of the Almighty, these questions be answered in the affirmative, then shall we indeed carry home with us a real treasure, a jewel of great price.”

It is hardly necessary to add, that the whole Assembly responded with a loud Amen to this touching appeal. At that instant they were all of one heart and one soul. The discordant elements had melted away in harmonious unity of purpose, and in this spirit they proceeded to discuss some of the difficult questions still remaining to be decided. The final motion was

That the meeting should not separate without agreeing to a declaration of Faith, in which the Evangelical character of the Church Confederation should be *briefly* and *clearly* expressed.

Various propositions were made on this head, and a lengthy debate ensued. The great difficulty lay in enunciating the broad principles of the Confederation in general terms, which should leave no opening to cavil or misrepresentation, and steer clear of too close an approximation to formal articles, which could not fail to produce disunion and schism. This was particularly the case as regarded the qualification of Deputies to be chosen by the different Churches to represent them in the Confederation. Fears were entertained that men of a rationalistic tendency might be elected by some of the Churches, who would act in a spirit opposed to that of the general body, and alter the character of the Confederation itself. It was argued, on the other hand, that the number of Churches of this tendency was not so great, and that there was little risk of their electing Deputies who would be altogether opposed to the Evangelical Faith. It was hardly possible that it should be so, after making a sincere declaration that the Reformed Confessions formed the basis of their Constitution. In the event, however, of an individual being so chosen, who did not hold the opinions of his own Church, as a man of honour he could not act in a spirit of hostility to these principles, the adherence to

which was the condition of membership in the Church he represented. It was strongly and truly remarked by some of the most distinguished Divines who took part in the discussion, that in times like these it is dangerous to insist too rigidly, or to place too much reliance on statutory law—an external formula. In the infancy of so delicate a negotiation it was especially important to avoid everything which could create mistrust—a thing almost inseparable from the very existence of clauses intended to be in the nature of guarantees, either of a positive or negative kind. No *absolute* guarantee can exist in man or man's ordinances. There will always be some point or other where it will fail, and where, consequently, there will be nothing to fall back upon, but the good faith and conscientious feeling of the individual.

As regarded the Rationalistic party, it was contended that they ought not to be excluded from a Church Confederation, any more than they are from local churches. "A distinction must be made between those who hold Pantheistic views, the enemies of Christianity and believers in natural religion, and those who may be said to be not far from the Kingdom of God." The former would naturally keep aloof of their own accord—the latter must not be discouraged or repulsed. To require from the deputies an individual declaration of their adhesion to the Reformed Faith would, it was thought, be needless and inquisitorial. On the other hand, it seemed expedient that the Association should make a public manifesto to Christendom of its Evangelical Faith, not embodied in articles indeed, but by a solemn pledge that such was the basis on which it was formed, and these the only principles by which its members would be guided in their future operations. The idea of a formal subscription to the letter of either of the Reformed Confessions was

almost unanimously at last rejected, in consequence of a question proposed by a Pastor from East Friesland. He stated that his brethren of the Reformed Church in that Province, a numerous body of Christians, faithful to the creed of their fathers, maintained the Divinity of Christ, and reconciliation through His Blood, but attached no weight to any definite confession or creed of the Reformation. It was necessary, therefore, to decide whether such persons would be admitted into the Church Confederation; and it being distinctly understood that they would be eligible and welcome members of it, the discussion terminated.

It will appear, therefore, from the above summary of the proceedings at Wittenberg, that the basis of the proposed Church Confederation, if not of a very broad and general character, is not to be framed on exclusive doctrinal grounds, but on the co-operation of all such individual churches as hold the leading principles of Evangelical Christianity. While thus united, indeed, in furtherance of a common object, each church will remain independent as to its articles and form of worship, recognising and admitting the compatibility of various shades of opinion on non-essential points, with a cordial combination of each and all, "as one body, for the glory of God and the propagation of the Gospel." Such, indeed, has been the view entertained by the German Church at different periods—"a principle neither Sectarian, nor Latitudinarian, but the only true Catholic principle of union."*

Before the meeting separated, the following Resolutions were agreed to:—

1. The Evangelical Church Communities of Germany will combine in a Church League.

* See Abeken's Letter to Pusey, in reference to certain Charges against the German Church, p. 35. London: 1842.

2. The Evangelical Church League is not a union abolishing the distinctions of Confessions, or annulling Confessional Churches, but an Evangelical Confederation.

3. The Evangelical Church League comprises all Church Communities framed on the basis of the Reformed Confessions, especially the Lutheran, Reformed, United, and Moravian. If any doubt shall arise as to admissibility to the League, the decision shall rest with the Confederation, and not depend upon the declaration of the Community so claiming admission.

4. Every Evangelical Church Community, as member of the League, remains, in respect to the regulation of its connexion with the State, its government, and internal arrangements, in doctrine, worship, and constitution, independent.

5. The object of the Evangelical Church League is to foster and advance all the common interests of the Church Communities which belong to it; especially

To exhibit the essential unity of the Evangelical Church, and the exercise of communion and brotherly dispositions.

To bear witness in common against everything un-Evangelical.

To offer mutual counsel and support.

To perform the office of mediator, if disputes arise between Church Communities, members of the League.

To advance all Social Christian Objects, Associations and Institutions, especially those of the Home Mission.

To assert and defend the Rights and Privileges which belong to the Evangelical Church Communities on Divine and Human grounds.

To make and maintain a bond of Union with all Evangelical Churches out of Germany.

6. The Church League is formed by means of a preliminary Evangelical Church Conference of Germany, attended by deputies from all the Church communities which belong to it. This Conference constitutes itself a legitimate association of the Evangelical Church, by the declaration to be subscribed by each of its members, that its faith is based on the grounds of the Reformed Confessions, and that it will act *only according* to these grounds.

7. The present voluntary meeting appoints a committee, to whom the duty of carrying out its intentions is intrusted. The Committee is instructed to convoke the meeting the year following, at the same time and place, and with the same character, in case the League shall not have been in the meantime established in an official manner. It has also the power of convoking it at any other time, if it shall deem it expedient so to do.

With the passing of these resolutions, the specific purpose of the Conference was brought to a conclusion. It was, however, warmly urged by some of the members, that the fundamental principles of the constitution of the proposed confederation should be more definitely laid down before they separated. The success of the undertaking, it was contended, would be greatly promoted if it were clearly established beyond doubt or cavil, that the basis of their Union was laid on strictly Evangelical grounds, and that consequently no church of an un-Evangelical tendency could by possibility be admissible into the new Evangelical Corporation. It was accordingly resolved, that

Efforts should be made to obtain the co-operation of a due proportion of Laymen in carrying out the objects of the Confederation, in conformity with the

principle of the Universal Priesthood of Believers in Christ.

That in matters which concern Faith and Conscience, the votes of a majority cannot be binding, and that the Evangelical Church neither recognises the Sovereignty of the State nor of the people in matters of Faith, but the Sovereignty of Christ alone, who is her only Head.

That as Christ, who is her Head, is visibly near to His Church in his *Word* and *Sacraments*, these must ever be the fixed and unalterable groundwork of the Evangelical Church, and the Rule of Faith for individuals, as well as the Church. No one, therefore, can establish any claim to share in Church administration (for instance, active and passive Rights of Election), who has not evinced his recognition of these principles in a public manner, i. e., by attending the Service of the Church, and Communicating.

Thus closed a Conference, which, in the opinion of those who took part in it, was one of the most important movements which have been made in Germany during this century. More than five hundred persons, the greater part of whom were clergy, assembled from all quarters of Germany to bear testimony to their faith, and to concentrate the isolated and distracted elements of religious feeling and Christian life, which were floating about on the surface of society, convulsed as it is by political agitation, and having the ties of moral and religious obligation everywhere loosened, not unfrequently entirely dissevered. Among them we find many names of men of high repute in Germany, and well known to that portion of the English public who are conversant with German writers on

theology and religious subjects generally. It will be evident from the tone of the discussion, that the great majority belong to the Orthodox and Pietistic class—what we should call essentially good Churchmen, although many of them represent the views of our Low Church, rather than those of the “high and dry” party. Among the names with which we are most familiar here are—Ullman, De Wette, Wichern,* Bethmann-Holweg, Nitsch, J. Müller, Sack, Stahl, Dorner, Hengstenberg, and Krummacher. We notice especially the latter name, both because his writings have enjoyed considerable popularity in this country, and because it would seem, from the tenour of his remarks on another occasion, that the progress of events had produced no slight modification of his views in reference to those, whose formula of Christian Faith is much less exclusive than that of the proposed Church confederation.

To persons with whom German Divinity and Infidelity are synonymous terms, a combination of men, such as those we have cited above, assembled for the professed purpose of endeavouring to raise up their national Religion and Faith from the lowest state into which it has ever fallen since the first French Revolution, will probably be no healthy sign, and give no promise of any amelioration in the moral and religious state of Germany. To those, however, who, from a knowledge of the character of the persons mentioned and the nature of their views, are competent to form a correct opinion, it will be a guarantee, that, if the plan proposed be not the most advisable, and the circle of their association be somewhat too restricted, there is still a remnant left of good men and true, whose heart and soul are dedicated to the cause of religion, and

* Director of the Rauhe Haus, near Hamburg.

who will, at least, prevent the dying embers of spiritual life from becoming altogether extinct.

What then, it will be asked, have been the fruits of the different religious movements we have described? Is Germany, in 1849, still a chaos as regards her religious state; and what are the remedies proposed by such as agree with none of the principles we have thus far enunciated? It would appear, from the general tone of opinion among men of the most different views, that the religious condition of Germany is intimately connected with her political state. A calm in the political world seems to be considered the indispensable preliminary to any steady and systematic consideration of the religious questions by which society has been so long agitated. We hear on all sides that there is a lull even in that agitation—that Society is too much absorbed in the politics of the day to pay any attention to a plan for Church Extension, Church Confederation, or, in a word, to think about Religion at all. The Wittenberg Conference, accordingly, would seem to have attracted very little notice. We are told, indeed, that it died a natural death. It would be, however, premature, we think, to come to such a conclusion. The Members of that Association are to be again convoked in September next, and it remains then to be seen whether the enthusiasm of 1848 has entirely evaporated, or whether it is likely to receive an increase of sympathy and goodwill on the part of the German public. Those, however, who take the most sanguine view of things seem strongly impressed with the idea, that the salvation of Germany, even as regards her religious state, is conditional upon her political regeneration, and the consolidation of that Unity which Statesmen and Diplomats are endeavouring to bring about. Singular as this may appear to English minds, it is the natural result, in part of the want of

civil liberty, to which Germans have not been accustomed, and in part of the speculative tendencies of the German character, in which they differ so much from ourselves. For the last two centuries, the German mind has sought in vain an outlet for its political speculations, which a rigid censorship of the Press has prohibited. Religious controversy has accordingly been its safety-valve. The consequence is, that the aspirations after political freedom which have been pent up by police-regulations have found a vent, often in the most licentious form of religious development. From the moment, however, that political changes opened a free passage to the current of political doctrines, the course of religious speculation was very materially stopped. Instead of a United German Church producing a United German State, as writers on Ecclesiastical subjects in this country have anticipated for them, their hopes of religious union now seem centred in the realization of political Unity. In order to attain this, however, an entire separation of Church and State, in the ordinary acceptance of the term, must first have taken place.

We have already seen that this is an event which is looked forward to by a numerous party in the Church with feelings of the deepest concern and apprehension. Whether these forebodings are well-founded, Time only can decide. Be the results what they may, it is the infallible consequence of a tenacious adherence to antiquated formularies, a system of compulsory subscription to tenets and symbols which have lost their influence on the conscience and the life, and which have only tended to encourage hypocrisy and deceit, by holding out the temptation of temporal advantages to the unscrupulous or indifferent, who, to gain some exclusive monopoly or social pre-eminence, will always be found

ready to swallow the proffered bait. A united German Church, if such a thing should ever exist, must necessarily be formed on a wider basis of doctrinal Confession than any which has yet been proposed. It must, in fact, include the most opposite extremes of religious opinion, and consequently require, if any, the most limited amount of subscription to Creeds and Formulas. It will, on the contrary, represent the Religious-Moral form of Christianity; and its principal aim will be to advance the Religious-Moral life of its Members, rather than to insist on some stereotyped form of Doctrines and Articles, and thereby do more to produce uniformity of Faith, and to discourage Theological disputes, than any other system which has been hitherto adopted. But this will necessarily imply a decided alteration in the position of the Clergy, as such, in relation to the Laity, and to each other in the various religious Persuasions—and this is obviously felt already, with very different sensations. There never was a moment when the exhibition of Hierarchical tendencies on the part of the Clergy would be so ill-timed and ill-advised. There never was a moment when such an attempt would be so inevitably branded as Priestcraft, and so assuredly defeat its own purposes. “With the altered relations of Church and State, the Clergy, as a privileged class, can no longer exist. Even in the exercise of their professional duties, they will only claim a very limited and relative superiority to educated Laymen.” “The irresistible authority of the official character of the Clergyman is irrecoverably gone,” says Professor Rothe. “In the present day, he must depend entirely upon the weight which he derives from his own *personal* dignity and efficiency, for that respect which is indispensable to bring a blessing upon his labours. To harp upon his spiritual vocation will only

make bad worse." A much wider toleration towards those who hold different opinions, will also be a necessary consequence of the new order of things. Symptoms of this conviction have already appeared, in a remarkable Charge delivered by a clergyman,* of most unqualified orthodoxy, whose writings have obtained considerable popularity in this country, and whose name we have mentioned among those who took an active part in the Wittenberg Conference. On the occasion of a Pastoral Conference at Gnadau, in Prussian Saxony, the very hot-bed of Rationalism—and subsequently at a meeting of a similar nature in Berlin—the tone of his observations, and his whole manner, formed a striking contrast to the high independent bearing he had hitherto exhibited. After using the most conciliatory language to the very persons whom he and his party had always treated as Freethinkers and Unbelievers, he proceeded to speak of the condition of the Church, her prospects, her dangers, and their remedies.

"The hurricane of Revolution," he said, "has broken over the old State, and will shortly engulf the Church herself. The Church, in her present condition, as regards Constitution, Worship, and Doctrine, cannot but appear, to the omnipotent 'Spirit of the Age,' as an institution, lagging far behind the general march of ideas, as an antiquated system which, if not requiring total abolition, calls out at all events for a searching and radical reform. What will be the result? In the first place she will be remodelled, in a democratic sense, the consequence of which will be the abrogation of the dogmatical obligation of the Symbols, and a very extensive freedom as to doctrine generally—abolition of uniformity of Worship—independence of the

* Krummacher, the author of "Elisha," &c.

separate Congregations as to the arrangements of their own Forms and Ceremonies, and cessation of compulsory celebration of Baptism, Marriage, and Confirmation." He then goes on to admit, on behalf of those with whom he has hitherto acted, that they have themselves, unconsciously and unwittingly, tended essentially, by their exclusiveness, to foment the unpopularity of the old Church. "We must allow that the Divine precept of 'Love your enemies' has not been heretofore acted upon by the clergy—still less can they boast of having heaped coals of fire upon the heads of their antagonists, or of having exerted themselves to win them over by a Christian spirit, instead of repulsing them by anathemas and excommunication. The 'German-Catholics' charge us with having shown more disposition to drive them back into the yoke of Romanism, which they had thrown off, than to receive them under our wings, and hold out to them the right hand of fellowship. The complaint, alas! is not unfounded. The 'Friends of Light' assert that we have invariably met them in battle-array, with drawn swords, and on no one occasion have shown any signs of a desire to approach them in a conciliatory spirit; and we cannot conscientiously deny the charge. Conduct like this has brought Orthodoxy into very bad odour, which has been lamentably increased by the unhappy schisms in our own camp. Let us, therefore, exert ourselves to save what yet remains. A free Church Constitution is called for—a Presbyterian and Synodal Constitution for the Congregations. It is time, my brethren, to abandon the hostile position we have hitherto taken up against such a proposition, and to adopt it the more readily, as it is incontestably sanctioned by the Apostolical Church. Let us not keep aloof from the impending changes in our Church system, but zealously and with good-will contribute our assistance in carrying them into execution."

We will notice only one or two other remarks which he is reported to have made, because they seem even more significant of an extensive change having come over the views of the rigidly Orthodox party, not merely as regards the clergy as contradistinguished from the laity, but also as evincing a disposition to abate somewhat of that dogmatical self-sufficiency with which they usurped to themselves the supreme judgment as to scriptural interpretation, and anathematized those who did not subscribe to all the doctrines which they held necessary to salvation.

“There is no longer,” continued Krummacher, “any halo by which the clergy are distinguished, other than proceeds from their own individual usefulness. In spite of pontificals and antiquity, we are not one hair’s-breadth nearer to God than the meanest of our so-called ‘lay brethren,’ who unite with us in raising their hearts and hands to the Throne of the Eternal. Away, then, with the illusion as to the mediatorial character of our official position—with the vain attempt to impose upon the world by caste-sanctity and priestly mystification! Away with priestcraft in every shape and form! The days of such mummary and bugbears are gone by. The world knows we are men like themselves. Let us, therefore, not pretend to anything more, but demean ourselves as men to men, as brothers to brothers! trusting for our influence to our own energies and the Spirit of God, which will not fail to attend upon our individual exertions in promoting His glory. The *absolute* legislative force of the Symbolical Books is no longer tenable; and here—be not shocked at the assertion—for truth and conscience’ sake we must frankly make the admission, that the Symbols, excellent as they are, only contain the *human expression of Divine doctrines*, and have no claim to ‘absolute infallibility,’ being subordinate to the

Word of God, by which they must be tested and corrected. We must likewise admit, that with the advance of exegetical criticism, many dogmas, which were heretofore considered as unassailable by any well-grounded arguments, have become open questions, or at least to some extent problematical, and that it may in consequence occur, that men of known apostolical spirit, and good report—men worthy of being our leaders, are necessarily excluded from our pulpits, because their conscience will not allow them to subscribe unconditionally to symbols which seem too narrow for the state of science in the present day. We must admit, lastly, that among the better-disposed portion of society there is clearly a tendency to union—a more deep-seated and substantial union than is made by the hands of man—a union which has long been realized in our Missionary and Bible Societies, and Associations of Christian Love, but which is becoming daily more and more powerful, and striving more and more to embody itself in an organization suitable to the spirit by which it is animated.

“ Out of the old Church, a young and renovated one is developing itself before our eyes. Let it be our care to attach ourselves to this young Church, and her free associations—and, instead of clinging tenaciously to the old Establishment—as much of it at least as survives, in its present form and with its present authority—to lend all the assistance in our power to consolidate the new order of things, *including the Revised Confession*, so that by the blessing of God, and by the outpouring of His Grace, it may grow up into a perfect work.”

It cannot be denied, that the tone of these remarks forms a very striking contrast to that of the Wittenberg Conference. We have no means of ascertaining, indeed,

whether any very considerable number of the Orthodox and Pietistic party have so far conformed to the spirit of the times, as to adopt the sensible and Christian advice thus offered to the consideration of the clergy of that particular diocese. It can hardly be, however, that so influential a man as Krummacher should have been merely expressing his own individual opinions—it is more probable that he took this opportunity of enunciating the ideas of a large body of clergy with whom he has been in the habit of acting. That such may be the case is devoutly to be hoped, for it will require not only great activity, but great prudence also, to steer clear of rocks in the stormy sea wherein Christianity is threatened with shipwreck, and from which she will hardly be rescued by her ancient pilots. Her compass, her rudder, and her anchor, will doubtless serve her still—these she can never give up. But in the hour of danger, when the tempest is raging furiously, the ship must be lightened—much of the ballast may be thrown overboard, and some of the freight, even, must perhaps be sacrificed to save the remainder. A powerful combination threatens to destroy the very bulwarks of religion, under pretence of reforming abuses and eradicating untruth. The attack will be made in different forms, and under different disguises—sometimes in undissembled hostility, sometimes in the insidious garb of a treacherous friendship. The former, indeed, is the least formidable. Common sense will, in most instances, be a safeguard against the avowed and repulsive Atheism of a Feuerbach,* while the subtle

* Feuerbach is now lecturing to large audiences of students and workmen, at Heidelberg, on the non-existence of a God, and the evils Christianity has brought upon the world.

poison of a Froude* insinuates itself almost unperceived into the very vitals, and has tainted the whole system before its presence is remarked. Injudicious friends, again, who increase the danger by applying improper remedies, are too frequently the unconscious allies of the common enemy. *Stare super vias antiquas*—authority of the Fathers—rigid adherence to words and creeds—blind faith—Mother Church, these are the weapons with which it is hoped to withstand the onslaught of Infidelity, and to arrest the progress of Human Reason, Philosophy, and Science. We do not pretend to prophesy what may be the fate reserved for Germany in a religious and moral point of view, but we feel confident that it will require far other tactics than these to make head against the storm. We hope and believe that the crisis in her political agitation may be already over; and that, as thousands are anticipating, the social calm may bring with it religious peace, unity, and concord. There are others whose forebodings are gloomy—who see no light in the horizon, and believe that the season of utter darkness and death is impending. All such anticipations are baseless, and all speculations premature. The scenes have been shifted too suddenly of late, to justify the most far-seeing from indulging in very decided prognostics. Germany is in the hand of God; and whether she have yet to be purified in the fire, or have already gone through the process of trial, and is only awaiting her regeneration, no man can with certainty pronounce. We, at least, will not pretend

* The Author of the "Nemesis of Faith," who has proved that, with all the abuse launched against German Infidelity, an English Clergyman can "out-Herod Herod."

to lift the veil, confident as we are that, sooner or later, her moral, religious, and intellectual elements will be re-adjusted in a salutary and enduring equilibrium; and that in times to come, when the unprejudiced historian shall enumerate the events and impressions, the hopes and the fears of this generation, posterity will turn with amazement to the denunciations of our gloomy contemporaries, and smile at the fallacy of prophecies that have never been fulfilled.

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